THE

COLLECTED WORKS

OF

THEODORE PARKER,

MINISTER OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY AT BOSTON, U.S.

CONTAINING HIS

THEOLOGICAL, POLEMICAL, AND CRITICAL WRITINGS,
SERMONS, SPEECHES, AND ADDRESSES,
AND LITERARY MISCELLANIES.

VOL. III.

DISCOURSES OF THEOLOGY.

LONDON:
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THE RELATION OF JESUS TO HIS AGE AND THE AGES.

A SERMON PREACHED AT THE THURSDAY LECTURE, IN BOSTON, DECEMBER 26, 1844.

Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?—John vii. 48.

In all the world there is nothing so remarkable as a great man; nothing so rare; nothing which so well repays study. Human nature is loyal at its heart, and is, always and everywhere, looking for this its true earthly sovereign. We sometimes say that our institutions, here in America, do not require great men; that we get along better without than with such. But let a real, great man light on our quarter of the planet; let us understand him, and straightway these democratic hearts of ours burn with admiration and with love. We wave in his words, like corn in the harvest wind. We should rejoice to obey him, for he would speak what we need to hear. Men are always half expecting such a man. But when he comes, the real, great man that God has been preparing,—men are disappointed; they do not recognize him. He does not enter the city through the gates which expectants had crowded. He is a fresh fact, brand new; not exactly like any former fact. Therefore men do not recognize nor acknowledge him. His language is strange, and his form unusual. He looks revolutionary, and pulls down ancient walls to build his own temple, or, at least, splits old rocks asunder, and quarries anew fresh granite and marble.

There are two classes of great men. Now and then some arise whom all acknowledge to be great, soon as they

appear. Such men have what is true in relation to the wants and expectations of to-day. They say, what many men wished but had not words for; they translate into thought what, as a dim sentiment, lay a burning in many a heart, but could not get entirely written out into consciousness. These men find a welcome. Nobody misunderstands them. The world follows at their chariot-wheels, and flings up its cap and shouts its huzzas,—for the world is loyal, and follows its king when it sees and knows him. The good part of the world follows the highest man it comprehends; the bad, whoever serves its turn.

But there is another class of men so great, that all cannot see their greatness. They are in advance of men's conjectures, higher than their dreams; too good to be actual, think some. Therefore, say many, there must be some mistake; this man is not so great as he seems; nay, he is no great man at all, but an impostor. These men have what is true not merely in relation to the wants and expectations of men here and to-day; but what is true in relation to the Universe, to Eternity, to God. They do not speak what you and I have been trying to say, and cannot; but what we shall one day, years hence, wish to say, after we have improved and grown up to man's estate.

Now it seems to me, the men of this latter class, when they come, can never meet the approbation of the censors and guides of public opinion. Such as wished for a new great man had a superstition of the last one in their minds. They expected the new to be just like the old, but he is altogether unlike. Nature is rich, but not rich enough to waste anything. So there are never two great men very strongly similar. Nay, this new great man, perhaps, begins by destroying much that the old one built up with tears and prayers. He shows, at first, the limitations and defects of the former great man; calls in question his authority. He refuses all masters; bows not to tradition; and with seeming irreverence, laughs in the face of the popular idols. How will the "respectable men," the men of a few good rules and those derived from their fathers, "the best of men and the wisest,"—how will they regard this new great man? They will see nothing remarkable in him except that he is fluent and superficial, dangerous and revolutionary. He disturbs their notions of order; he

shows that the institutions of society are not perfect; that their imperfections are not of granite or marble, but only of words written on soft wax, which may be erased and others written thereon anew. He shows that such imperfect institutions are less than one great man. The guides and censors of public opinion will not honour such a man, they will hate him. Why not? Some others not half so well bred, nor well furnished with precedents, welcome the new great man; welcome his ideas; welcome his person. They say, "Behold a Prophet."

When Jesus, the son of Mary, a poor woman, wife of Joseph the carpenter, in the little town of Nazareth, when he "began to be about thirty years old," and began also to open his mouth in the synagogues and the highways, nobody thought him a great man at all, as it seems. "Who are you?" said the guardians of public opinion. He found men expecting a great man. This, it seems, was the common opinion, that a great man was to arise, and save the Church, and save the State. They looked back to Moses, a divine man of antiquity, whose great life had passed into the world, and to whom men had done honour, in various ways; amongst others, by telling all sorts of wonders he wrought, and declaring that none could be so great again; none get so near to God. They looked back also to the prophets, a long line of divine men, so they reckoned, but less than the awful Moses; his stature was far above the nation, who hid themselves in his shadow. Now the well-instructed children of Abraham thought the next great man must be only a copy of the last, repeat his ideas, and work in the old fashion. Sick men like to be healed by the medicine which helped them the last time; at least, by the customary drugs which are popular.

In Judea, there were then parties of men, distinctly marked. There were the Conservatives—they represented the Church, tradition, ecclesiastical or theocratical authority. They adhered to the words of the old books, the forms of the old rites, the tradition of the elders. "Nobody but a Jew can be saved," said they; "he only by circumcision, and the keeping of the old formal law; God likes that, He accepts nothing else." These were the Pharisees, with

their servants the Scribes. Of this class were the Priests and the Levites in the main, the National party, the Native-Hebrew party of that time. They had tradition, Moses and the prophets; they believed in tradition, Moses and the prophets, at least in public; what they believed in private God knew, and so did they. I know nothing of that.

Then there was the indifferent party; the Sadducees, the State. They had wealth, and they believed in it, both in public and private too. They had a more generous and extensive cultivation than the Pharisees. They had intercourse with foreigners, and understood the writers of Ionia and Athens which the Pharisee held in abhorrence. These were sleek respectable men, who, in part, disbelieved the Jewish theology. It is no very great merit to disbelieve even in the devil, unless you have a positive faith in God to take up your affections. The Sadducee believed neither in angel nor resurrection—not at all in the immortality of the soul. He believed in the State, in the laws, the constables, the prisons, and the axe. In religious matters it seems the Pharisee had a positive belief, only it was a positive belief in a great mistake. In religious matters the Sadducee had no positive belief at all; not even in an error: at least, some think so. His distinctive affirmation was but a denial. He believed what he saw with his eyes, touched with his fingers, tasted with his tongue. He never saw, felt, nor tasted immortal life; he had no belief therein. There was once a heathen Sadducee who said, "My right arm is my God!"

There was likewise a party of Come-outers. They despaired of the State and the Church too, and turned off into the wilderness, "where the wild asses quench their thirst," building up their organizations free, as they hoped, from all ancient tyrannies. The Bible says nothing directly of these men in its canonical books. It is a curious omission; but two Jews, each acquainted with foreign writers, Josephus and Philo, give an account of these. These were the Essenes, an ascetic sect, hostile to marriage, at least, many of them, who lived in a sort of association by themselves, and had all things in common.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees had no great living and ruling ideas; none I mean which represented man, his hopes, wishes, affections, his aspirations, and power of

progress. That is no very rare case, perhaps, you will say, for a party in the Church or the State to have no such ideas, but they had not even a plausible substitute for such ideas. They seemed to have no faith in man, in his divine nature, his power of improvement. The Essenes had ideas; had a positive belief; had faith in man, but it was weakened in a great measure by their machinery. They, like the Pharisees and the Sadducees, were imprisoned in their organization, and probably saw no good out of their own party lines.

It is a plain thing that no one of these three parties would accept, acknowledge, or even perceive the greatness of Jesus of Nazareth. His ideas were not their notions. He was not the man they were looking for; not at all the Messiah, the anointed one of God, which they wanted. The Sadducee expected no new great man unless it was a Roman quæstor or procurator; the Pharisees looked for a Pharisee stricter than Gamaliel; the Essenes for an Ascetic. It is so now. Some seem to think that if Jesus were to come back to the earth, he would preach Unitarian sermons, from a text out of the Bible, and prove his divine mission and the everlasting truths, the truths of necessity that he taught, in the Unitarian way, by telling of the miracles he wrought eighteen hundred years ago; that he would prove the immortality of the soul by the fact of his own corporeal resurrection. Others seem to think that he would deliver homilies of a severer character; would rate men roundly about total depravity, and tell of unconditional election, salvation without works, and imputed righteousness, and talk of hell till the women and children fainted, and the knees of men smote together for trembling. Perhaps both would be mistaken.

So it was then. All these three classes of men, imprisoned in their prejudices and superstitions, were hostile. The Pharisees said, "We know that God spake unto Moses; but as for this fellow, we know not whence he is. He blasphemeth Moses and the prophets; yea, he hath a devil, and is mad, why hear him?" The Sadducees complained that "he stirred up the people;" so he did. The Essenes, no doubt, would have it that he was "a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." Tried by these three standards, the judgment

was true; what could he do to please these three parties? Nothing! nothing that he would do. So they hated him; all hated him, and sought to destroy him. The cause is plain. He was so deep they could not see his profoundness; too high for their comprehension; too far before them for their sympathy. He was not the great man of the day. He found all organizations against him; Church and State. Even John the Baptist, a real prophet, but not the prophet, doubted if Jesus was the one to be followed. If Jesus had spoken for the Pharisees, they would have accepted his speech and the speaker too. Had he favoured the Sadducees, he had been a great man in their camp, and Herod would gladly have poured wine for the eloquent Galilean, and have satisfied the carpenter's son with purple and fine linen. Had he praised the Essenes, uttering their Shibboleth, they also would have paid him his price, have made him the head of their association perhaps, at least, have honoured him in their way. He spoke for none of these. Why should they honour or even tolerate him? It were strange had they done so. Was it through any fault or deficiency of Jesus that these men refused him? quite the reverse. The rain falls and the sun shines on the evil and the good; the work of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness is before all men, revealing the invisible things, yet the fool hath said, ay, said in his heart, "There is no God!"

Jesus spoke not for the prejudices of such, and therefore they rejected him. But as he spoke truths for man, truths from God, truths adapted to man's condition there, to man's condition everywhere and always, when the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes went away, their lips curling with scorn, when they gnashed on one another with their teeth, there were noble men and humble women who had long awaited the consolation of Israel, and they heard him, heard him gladly. Yes, they left all to follow him. Him! no, it was not him they followed; it was God in him they obeyed, the God of truth, the God of love.

There were men not counted in the organized sects; men weary of absurdities; thirsting for the truth; sick, they knew not why nor of what, yet none the less sick, and waiting for the angel who should heal them, though

by troubled waters and remedies unknown. These men had not the prejudices of a strictly organized and narrow sect. Perhaps they had not its knowledge, or its good manners. They were "unlearned and ignorant men," those early followers of Christ. Nay, Jesus himself had no extraordinary culture, as the world judges of such things. His townsmen wondered, on a famous occasion, how he had learned to read. He knew little of theologies, it would seem; the better for him, perhaps. No doubt the better for us that he insisted on none. He knew they were not religion. The men of Galilee did not need theology. The youngest scribe in the humblest theological school at Jerusalem, if such a thing were in those days, could have furnished theology enough to believe in a lifetime. They did need religion; they did see it as Jesus unfolded its loveliness; they did welcome it when they saw; welcome it in their hearts.

If I were a poet as some are born, and skilled to paint with words what shall stand out as real, to live before the eye, and then dwell in the affectionate memory for ever, I would tell of the audience which heard the Sermon on the mount, which listened to the parables, the rebukes, the beautiful beatitudes. They were plain men, and humble women; many of them foolish like you and me; some of them sinners. But they all had hearts; had souls, all of them—hearts made to love, souls expectant of truth. When he spoke, some said, no doubt, "That is a new thing, that The true worshipper shall worship in spirit and in truth, as well here as in Jerusalem, now as well as any time; that also is a hard saying, Love your enemies; forgive them, though seventy times seven they smite and offend you; that notion that the law and the prophets are contained, all that is essentially religious thereof, in one precept, Love men as yourself, and God with all your might. This differs a good deal from the Pharisaic orthodoxy of the synagogue. That is a bold thing, presumptuous and revolutionary, to say, I am greater than the temple, wiser than Solomon, a better symbol of God than both." But there was something deeper than Jewish orthodoxy in their heart; something that Jewish orthodoxy could not satisfy, and what was yet more troublesome to ecclesiastical guides, something that Jewish ortho-

doxy could not keep down, nor even cover up. Sinners were converted at his reproof. They felt he rebuked whom he loved. Yet his pictures of sin, and sinners too, were anything but flattering. There was small comfort in them. Still it was not the publicans and harlots who laid their hands on the place where their hearts should be, saying, "You hurt our feelings," and "we can't bear you!" Nay, they pondered his words, repenting in tears. He showed them their sin; its cause, its consequence, its cure. To them he came as a Saviour, and they said, "Thou art well-come," those penitent Magdalenes weeping at his feet.

It would be curious could we know the mingled emotions that swayed the crowd which rolled up around Jesus, following him, as the tides obey the moon, wherever he went; curious to see how faces looked doubtful at first as he began to speak at Tabor or Gennesareth, Capernaum or Gischala, then how the countenance of some lowered and grew black with thunder suppressed but cherished, while the face of others shone as a branch of stars seen through some disparted cloud in a night of fitful storms, a moment seen and then withdrawn. It were curious to see how gradually many discordant feelings, passion, prejudice, and pride, were hushed before the tide of melodious religion he poured out around him, baptizing anew saint and sinner, and old and young, into one brotherhood of a common soul, into one immortal service of the universal God; to see how this young Hebrew maid, deep-hearted, sensitive, enthusiastic, self-renouncing, intuitive of heavenly truth, rich as a young vine, with clustering affections just purpling into ripeness,—how she seized, first and all at once, the fair ideal, and with generous bosom confidingly embraced it too; how that old man, gray-bearded, with baldness on his head, full of precepts and precedents, the lore of his fathers, the experience of a hard life, logical, slow, calculating, distrustful, remembering much and fearing much, but hoping a little, confiding only in the fixed, his reverence for the old deepening as he himself became of less use,—to see how he received the glad inspirations of the joiner's son, and wondering felt his youth steal slowly back upon his heart, reviving aspirations long ago forgot, and then the crimson tide of early hope come gush-

ing, tingling on through every limb; to see how the young man halting between principle and passion, not yet petrified into worldliness, but struggling, uncertain, half reluctant, with those two serpents, Custom and Desire, that beautifully twined about his arms and breast and neck their wormy folds, concealing underneath their burnished scales the dragon's awful strength, the viper's poison fang, the poor youth caressing their snaky crests, and toying with their tongues of flame—to see how he slowly, reluctantly, amid great questionings of heart, drank in the words of truth, and then, obedient to the angel in his heart, shook off, as ropes of sand, that hideous coil, and trod the serpents underneath his feet. All this, it were curious, ay, instructive too, could we but see.

They heard him with welcome various as their life. The old men said, "It is Moses or Elias; it is Jeremiah, one of the old prophets arisen from the dead, for God makes none such, now-a-days, in the sterile dotage of mankind." The young men and maidens doubtless it was that said, "This is the Christ; the desire of the nations; the hope of the world, the great new prophet; the Son of David; the Son of man; yes, the Son of God. He shall be our king." Human nature is loyal, and follows its king soon as it knows him. Poor lost sheep! the children of men look always for their guide, though so often they look in vain.

How he spoke, words deep and piercing; rebukes for the wicked, doubly rebuking, because felt to have come out from a great, deep, loving heart. His first word was, perhaps, "Repent," but with the assurance that the kingdom of God was here and now, within reach of all. How his doctrines, those great truths of nature, commended themselves to the heart of each, of all simple-souled men looking for the truth! He spoke out of his experience; of course into theirs. He spoke great doctrines, truths vast as the soul, eternal as God, winged with beauty from the loveliness of his own life. Had he spoken for the Jews alone, his words had perished with that people; for that time barely, the echo of his name had died away in his native hamlet; for the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, you and I had heard of him but as a Rabbi; nay, had never been blest by him at all. Words for a nation,

an age, a sect, are of use in their place, yet they soon come to nought. But as he spoke for eternity, his truths ride on the wings of time; as he spoke for man, they are welcome, beautiful and blessing, wherever man is found, and so must be till man and time shall cease.

He looked not back, as the Pharisee, save for illustrations and examples. He looked forward for his direction. He looked around for his work. There it lay, the harvest plenteous, the labourers few. It is always so. He looked not to men for his idea, his word to speak; as little for their applause. He looked in to God, for guidance, wisdom, strength, and as water in the wilderness, at the stroke of Moses, in the Hebrew legend, so inspiration came at his call, a mighty stream of truth for the nation, faint, feeble, afraid, and wandering for the promised land; drink for the thirsty, and cleansing for the unclean.

But he met opposition; O, yes, enough of it. How could it be otherwise? It must be so. The very soul of peace, he brought a sword. His word was a consuming fire. The Pharisees wanted to be applauded, commended; to have their sect, their plans, their traditions praised and flattered. His word to them was "Repent;" of them, to the people, "Such righteousness admits no man to the kingdom of heaven; they are a deceitful prophecy, blind guides, hypocrites; not sons of Abraham, but children of the devil." They could not bear him; no wonder at it. He was the aggressor; had carried the war into the very heart of their system. They turned out of their company a man whose blindness he healed, because he confessed that fact. They made a law that all who believed on him, should also be cast out. Well they might hate him, those old Pharisees. His existence was their reproach; his preaching their trial; his life with its outward goodness, his piety within, was their condemnation. The man was their ruin, and they knew it. The cunning can see their own danger, but it is only men wise in mind, or men simple of heart, that can see their real, permanent safety and defence; never the cunning, neither then, neither now.

Jesus looked to God for his truth, his great doctrines not his own,—private, personal, depending on his idiosyncracies, and therefore only subjectively true,—but God's,

universal, everlasting, the absolute religion. I do not know that he did not teach some errors also, along with it. I care not if he did. It is by his truths that I know him, the absolute religion he taught and lived; by his highest sentiments that he is to be appreciated. He had faith in God and obeyed God; hence his inspiration, great, in proportion to the greater endowments, moral and religious, which God gave him, great likewise in proportion to his perfect obedience. He had faith in man none the less. Who ever yet had faith in God that had none in man? I know not. Surely no inspired prophet. As Jesus had faith in man, so he spoke to men. Never yet, in the wide world, did a prophet arise, appealing with a noble heart and a noble life to the soul of goodness in man, but that soul answered to the call. It was so most eminently with Jesus. The Scribes and Pharisees could not understand by what authority he taught. Poor Pharisees! how could they? His phylacteries were no broader than those of another man; nay, perhaps he had no phylacteries at all, nor even a broad-bordered garment. Men did not salute him in the market-place, sandals in hand, with their "Rabbi! Rabbi!" Could such men understand by what authority he taught? no more than they dared answer his questions. They that knew him, felt he had authority quite other than that claimed by the Scribes; the authority of true words, the authority of a noble life; yes, authority which God gives a great moral and religious man. God delegates authority to men just in proportion to their power of truth, and their power of goodness; to their being and their life. So God spoke in Jesus, as he taught the perfect religion, anticipated, developed, but never yet transcended.

This then was the relation of Jesus to his age: the sectarians cursed him; cursed him by their gods; rejected him, abused him, persecuted him; sought his life. Yes, they condemned him in the name of God. All evil, says the proverb, begins in that name; much continues to claim it. The religionists, the sects, the sectarian leaders, rejected him, condemned and slew him at the last, hanging his body on a tree. Poor priests of the people, they hoped thereby to stifle that awful soul! they only stilled

the body; that soul spoke with a thousand tongues. So in the times of old when the Saturnian day began to dawn, it might be fabled that the old Titanic race, lovers of darkness and haters of the light, essayed to bar the rising morning from the world, and so heaped Pelion upon Ossa, and Olympus on Pelion; but first the day sent up his crimson flush upon the cloud, and then his saffron tinge, and next the sun came peering o'er the loftiest height, magnificently fair—and down the mountain's slanting ridge poured the intolerable day; meanwhile those triple hills, laboriously piled, came toppling, tumbling down, with lumbering crush, and underneath their ruin hid the helpless giants' grave. So was it with men who sat in Moses' seat. But this people, that "knew not the law," and were counted therefore accursed, they welcomed Jesus as they never welcomed the Pharisee, the Sadducee, or the Scribe. Ay, hence were their tears. The hierarchical fire burnt not so bright contrasted with the sun. That people had a Simon Peter, a James, and a John, men not free from faults, no doubt, the record shows it, but with hearts in their bosoms, which could be kindled, and then could light other hearts. Better still, there were Marthas and Marys among that people who "knew not the law" and were cursed. They were the mothers of many a church.

The character of Jesus has not changed; his doctrines are still the same; but what a change in his relation to the age, nay to the ages. The stone that the builders rejected is indeed become the head of the corner, and its foundation too. He is worshipped as a God. That is the rank assigned him by all but a fraction of the Christian world. It is no wonder. Good men worship the best thing they know, and call it God. What was taught to the mass of men, in those days, better than the character of Christ? Should they rather worship the Grecian Jove, or the Jehovah of the Jews? To me it seems the moral attainment of Jesus was above the hierarchical conception of God, as taught at Athens, Rome, Jerusalem. Jesus was the prince of peace, the king of truth, praying for his enemies—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" The Jehovah of the Old Testament was awful

and stern, a man of war, hating the wicked. The sacerdotal conception of God at Rome and Athens was lower yet. No wonder, then, that men soon learned to honour Jesus as a God, and then as God himself. Apostolical and other legends tell of his divine birth, his wondrous power that healed the sick, palsied and crippled, deaf and dumb and blind, created bread, turned water into wine, and bid obedient devils come and go; a power that raised the dead. They tell that nature felt with him, and at his death the strongly sympathizing sun paused at high noon, and for three hours withheld the day; that rocks were rent, and opening graves gave up their sainted dead, who trod once more the streets of Zion, the first-fruits of them that slept; they tell too how disappointed Death gave back his prey, and spirit-like, Jesus restored, in flesh and shape the same, passed through the doors shut up, and in a bodily form was taken up to heaven before the face of men! Believe men of these things as they will. To me they are not truth and fact, but mythic symbols and poetry; the psalm of praise with which the world's rude heart extols and magnifies its King. It is for his truth and his life, his wisdom, goodness, piety, that he is honoured in my heart; yes, in the world's heart. It is for this that in his name churches are built, and prayers are prayed; for this that the best things we know, we honour with his name.

He is the greatest person of the ages; the proudest achievement of the human race. He taught the absolute religion, love to God and man. That God has yet greater men in store I doubt not; to say this is not to detract from the majestic character of Christ, but to affirm the omnipotence of God. When they come, the old contest will be renewed, the living prophet stoned; the dead one worshipped. Be that as it may, there are duties he teaches us far different from those most commonly taught. He was the greatest fact in the whole history of man. Had he conformed to what was told him of men; had he counselled only with flesh and blood; he had been nothing but a poor Jew—the world had lost that rich endowment of religious genius, that richest treasure of religious life, the glad tidings of the one religion, absolute and true. What if he had said, as others, "None can be greater than

Moses, none so great?" He had been a dwarf; the spirit of God had faded from his soul! But he conferred with God, not men; took counsel of his hopes, not his fears. Working for men, with men, by men, trusting in God, and pure as truth, he was not scared at the little din of Church or State, and trembled not, though Pilate and Herod were made friends only to crucify him that was a born King of the world. Methinks I hear that lofty spirit say to you or me, Poor brother, fear not, nor despair. The goodness actual in me is possible for all. God is near thee now as then to me; rich as ever in truth, as able to create, as willing to inspire. Daily and nightly He showers down his infinitude of light. Open thine eyes to see, thy heart to live. Lo, God is here.

A SERMON ON IMMORTAL LIFE.

PREACHED AT THE MELODEON, ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1846.

The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God: their hope is full of immortality.—Wisdom of Solomon iii. 1, 4.

It is the belief of mankind that we shall all live for ever. This is not a doctrine of Christianity alone. It belongs to the human race. You may find nations so rude that they live houseless, in caverns of the earth; nations that have no letters, not knowing the use of bows and arrows, fire, or even clothes; but no nation without a belief in immortal life. The form of that belief is often grotesque and absurd; the mode of proof ridiculous; the expectations of what the future life is to be are often childish and silly. But notwithstanding all that, the fact still remains, the belief that the soul of a man never dies.

How did mankind come by this opinion? "By a miraculous revelation," says one. But according to the common theory of miraculous revelations, the race could not have obtained it in this way, for according to that theory the heathen had no such revelations; yet we find this doctrine the settled belief of the whole heathen world. The Greeks and Romans believed it long before Christ; the Chaldees, with no pretence to miraculous inspiration, taught the idea of immortality; while the Jews, spite of their alleged revelations, rested only in the dim sentiment thereof.

It was not arrived at by reasoning. It requires a good deal of hard thinking to reason out and prove this matter. Yet you find this belief among nations not capable as yet

of that art of thinking and to that degree, nations who never tried to prove it, and yet believe it as confidently as we. The human race did not sit down and think it out; never waited till they could prove it by logic and metaphysics; did not delay their belief till a miraculous revelation came to confirm it. It came to mankind by intuition; by instinctive belief, the belief which comes unavoidably from the nature of man. In this same way came the belief in God; the love of man; the sentiment of justice. Men could see, and knew they could see, before they proved it; before they had theories of vision; without waiting for a miraculous revelation to come and tell them they had eyes, and might see if they would look. Some faculties of the body act spontaneously at first—so others of the spirit.

Immortality is a fact of man's nature, so it is a part of the universe, just as the sun is a fact in the heavens and a part of the universe. Both are writings from God's hand; each therefore a revelation from Him, and of Him; only not miraculous, but natural, regular, normal. Yet each is just as much a revelation from Him as if the great Soul of all had spoken in English speech to one of us and said, "There is a sun there in the heavens, and thou shalt live for ever." Yes, the fact is more certain than such speech would make it, for this fact speaks always—a perpetual revelation, and no words can make it more certain.

As a man attains consciousness of himself, he attains consciousness of his immortality. At first he asks proof no more of his eternal existence than of his present life; instinctively he believes both. Nay, he does not separate the two; this life is one link in that golden and electric chain of immortality; the next life another and more bright, but in the same chain. Immortality is what philosophers call an ontological fact; it belongs essentially to the being of man, just as the eye is a physiological fact and belongs to the body of man. To my mind this is the great proof of immortality: the fact that it is written in human nature; written there so plain that the rudest nations have not failed to find it, to know it; written just as much as form is written on the circle, and extension on matter in general. It comes to our consciousness as naturally as the notions of time and space. We feel it as

a desire; we feel it as a fact. What is thus in man is writ there of God who writes no lies. To suppose that this universal desire has no corresponding gratification, is to represent Him, not as the father of all, but as only a deceiver. I feel the longing after immortality, a desire essential to my nature, deep as the foundation of my being; I find the same desire in all men. I feel conscious of immortality; that I am not to die; no, never to die, though often to change. I cannot believe this desire and consciousness are felt only to mislead, to beguile, to deceive me. I know God is my father, and the father of the nations. Can the Almighty deceive his children? For my own part, I can conceive of nothing which shall make me more certain of my immortality. I ask no argument from learned lips. No miracle could make me more sure; no, not if the sheeted dead burst cerement and shroud, and rising forth from their honoured tombs stood here before me, the disenchanted dust once more enchanted with that fiery life; no, not if the souls of all my sires since time began came thronging round, and with miraculous speech told me they lived and I should also live. I could only say, "I know all this before, why waste your heavenly speech!" I have now indubitable certainty of eternal life. Death removing me to the next state, can give me infallible certainty.

But there are men who doubt of immortality. They say they are conscious of the want, not of the fact. They need a proof. The exception here proves the rule. You do not doubt your personal and conscious existence now; you ask no proof of that; you would laugh at me should I try to convince you that you are alive and self-conscious. Yet one of the leaders of modern philosophy wanted a proof of his as a basis for his science, and said,—"I am because I think." But his thought required proof as much as his being; yes, logically more, for being is the ground of thinking, not thinking of being. At this day there are sound men who deny the existence of this outward world, declaring it only a dream-world. This ground they say, and yonder sun have been but in fancy, like the sun and ground you perchance dreamed of last night whose being was only a being-dreamed. These are exceptional men, and help prove the common rule, that man

trusts his senses and believes an outward world. Yet such are more common amongst philosophers than men who doubt of their immortal life. You cannot easily reason those men out of their philosophy and into their senses, nor by your own philosophy perhaps convince them that there is an outward world.

I think few of you came to your belief in everlasting life through reasoning. Your belief grew out of your general state of mind and heart. You could not help it. Perhaps few of you ever sat down and weighed the arguments for and against it, and so made up your mind. Perhaps those who have the firmest consciousness of the fact are least familiar with the arguments which confirm that consciousness. If a man disbelieves it, if he denies it, his opinion is not often to be changed immediately or directly by argument. His special conviction has grown out of his general state of mind and heart, and is only to be removed by a change in his whole philosophy. I am not honouring men for their belief, nor blaming men who doubt or deny. I do not believe any one ever willingly doubted this; ever purposely reasoned himself into the denial thereof. Men doubt because they cannot help it; not because they will, but must.

There are a great many things true which no man as yet can prove true; some things so true that nothing can make them plainer, or more plainly true. I think it is so with this doctrine, and therefore, for myself, ask no argument. With my views of man, of God, of the relation between the two, I want no proof, satisfied with my own consciousness of immortality. Yet there are arguments which are fair, logical, just, which satisfy the mind, and may, perhaps, help persuade some men who doubt, if such men there are amongst you. I think that immortality is a fact of consciousness; a fact given in the constitution of man: therefore a matter of sentiment. But it requires thought to pick it out from amongst the other facts of consciousness. Though at first merely a feeling, a matter of sentiment, on examination it becomes an idea—a matter of thought. It will bear being looked at in the sharpest and dryest light of logic. Truth never flinches before reason. It is so with our consciousness of God; that is an ontological fact, a fact given in the nature of man. At

first it is a feeling, a matter of sentiment. By thought we abstract this fact from other facts; we find an idea of God. That is a matter of philosophy, and the analyzing mind legitimates the idea, and at length demonstrates the existence of God, which we first learned without analysis, and by intuition. A great deal has been written to prove the existence of God, and that by the ablest men; yet I cannot believe that any one was ever reasoned directly into a belief in God, by all those able men, nor directly out of it by all the sceptics and scoffers. Indirectly such works affect men, change their philosophy and modes of thought, and so help them to one or the other conclusion.

The idea of immortality, like the idea of God, in a certain sense, is born in us, and fast as we come to consciousness of ourselves we come to consciousness of God, and of ourselves as immortal. The higher we advance in wisdom, goodness, piety, the largest place do God and immortality hold in our experience and inward life. I think that is the regular and natural process of a man's development. Doubt of either seems to me an exception, an irregularity. Causes that remove the doubt must be general more than special.

However, in order to have a basis of thought and reasoning, as well as of intuition and reason, let me mention some of the arguments for everlasting life.

I. The first is drawn from the general belief of mankind. The greatest philosophers and the most profound and persuasive religious teachers of the whole world have taught this. That is an important fact, for these men represent the consciousness of mankind in the highest development it has yet reached, and in such points are the truest representatives of man. What is more, the human race believes it, not merely as a thing given by miraculous revelation, not as a matter proven by science, not as a thing of tradition resting on some man's authority, but believes it instinctively, not knowing and not asking why, or how; believes it as a fact of consciousness. Now in a matter of this sort the opinion of the human race is worth considering. I do not value very much the opinion of a priesthood in Rome or Judea, or elsewhere, on this point, or any other, for they may have designs adverse to the truth.

But the general sentiment of the human race in a matter like this is of the greatest importance. This general sentiment of mankind is a quite different thing from public opinion, which favours freedom in one country and slavery in another; this sentiment of mankind relates to what is a matter of feeling with most men. It is only a few thinkers that have made it a matter of thought. The opinion of mankind, so far as we know, has not changed on this point for four thousand years. Since the dawn of history, man's belief in immortality has continually been developing and getting deeper fixed.

Still more, this belief is very dear to mankind. Let me prove that. If it were true that one human soul was immortal and yet was to be eternally damned, getting only more clotted with crime and deeper bit by agony as the ages went slowly by, then immortality were a curse, not to that man only, but to all mankind—for no amount of happiness, merited or undeserved, could ever atone or make up for the horrid wrong done to that one most miserable man. Who of you is there that could relish heaven, or even bear it for a moment, knowing that a brother was doomed to smart with ever greatening agony, while year on year, and age on age, the endless chain of eternity continued to coil round the flying wheels of hell? I say the thought of one such man would fill even heaven with misery, and the best man of men would scorn the joys of everlasting bliss, would spurn at heaven and say, "Give me my brother's place; for me there is no heaven while he is there!" Now it has been popularly taught, that not one man alone, but the vast majority of all mankind, are thus to be condemned; immortal only to be everlastingly wretched. That is the popular doctrine now in this land. It has been so taught in the Christian churches these sixteen centuries and more—taught in the name of Christ! Such an immortality would be a curse to men, to every man; as much so to the "saved" as to the "lost;" for who would willingly stay in heaven, and on such terms? Surely not he who wept with weeping men! Yet in spite of this vile doctrine drawn over the world to come, mankind religiously believes that each shall live for ever. This shows how strong is the instinct which can lift up such a foul and hateful doctrine and still

live on. Tell me not that scoffers and critics shall take away man's faith in endless life: it has stood a harder test than can ever come again.

II. The next argument is drawn from the nature of man.

1. All men desire to be immortal. This desire is instinctive, natural, universal. In God's world such a desire implies the satisfaction thereof equally natural and universal. It cannot be that God has given man this universal desire of immortality, this belief in it, and yet made it all a mockery. Man loves truth; tells it; rests only in it; how much more God who is the trueness of truth. Bodily senses imply their objects—the eye light, the ear sound; the touch, the taste, the smell, things relative thereto. Spiritual senses likewise foretell their object,—are silent prophecies of endless life. The love of justice, beauty, truth, of man and God, points to realities unseen as yet. We are ever hungering after noblest things, and what we feed on makes us hunger more. The senses are satisfied, but the soul never.

2. Then, too, while this composite body unavoidably decays, this simple soul which is my life decays not, Reason, the affections, all the powers that make the man, decay not. True, the organs by which they act become impaired. But there is no cause for thinking that love, conscience, reason, will ever become weaker in man; but cause for thinking that all these continually become more strong. Was the mind of Newton gone when his frame, long over-tasked, refused its wonted work?

3. Here on earth, everything in its place and time matures. The acorn and the chestnut, things natural to this climate, ripen every year. A longer season would make them no better nor bigger. It is so with our body—that, under proper conditions, becomes mature. It is so with all the things of earth. But man is not fully grown as the acorn and the chestnut; never gets mature. Take the best man and the greatest—all his faculties are not developed, fully grown and matured. He is not complete in the qualities of a man; nay, often half his qualities lie all unused. Shall we conclude these are never to obtain development and do their work? The analogy of nature tells us that man, the new-born plant, is but removed by

death to another soil, where he shall grow complete and become mature.

4. Then, too, each other thing under its proper conditions not only ripens but is perfect also after its kind. Each clover-seed is perfect as a star. Every lion, as a general rule, is a common representation of all lionhood; the ideal of his race made real in him, a thousand years of life would not make him more. But where is the Adamitic man; the type and representative of his race, who makes actual its idea? Even Jesus bids you not call him good; no man has all the manhood of mankind. Yes, there are rudiments of greatness in us all, but abortive, incomplete, and stopped in embryo. Now all these elements of manhood point as directly to another state as the unfinished walls of yonder rising church intimate that the work is not complete, that the artist here intends a roof, a window there, here a tower, and over all a heaven-piercing spire. All men are abortions, our failure pointing to the real success. Nay, we are all waiting to be born, our whole nature looking to another world, and dimly presaging what that world shall be. Death, however we misname him, seasonable or out of time, is the birth-angel, that alone.

5. Besides, the presence of injustice, of wrong, points the same way. The fact that one man goes out of this life in childhood, in manhood, at any time before the natural measure of his days is full; the fact that any one is by circumstances made wretched; that he is hindered from his proper growth and has not here his natural due—all intimates to me his future life. I know that God is just. I know His justice too shall make all things right, for He must have the power, the wish, the will therefor, to speak in human speech. I see the injustice in this city, its pauperism, suffering, and crime, men smarting all their life, and by no fault of theirs. I know there must be another hemisphere to balance this; another life, wherein justice shall come to all and for all. Else God were unjust; and an unjust God to me is no God at all, but a wretched chimera which my soul rejects with scorn. I see the autumn prefigured in the spring. The flowers of May-day foretold the harvest, its rosy apples and its yellow ears of corn. As the bud now lying cold and close upon the bark

of every tree throughout our northern clime is a silent prophecy of yet another spring and other summers, and harvests too; so this instinctive love of justice scantly budding here and nipped by adverse fate, silently but clearly tells of a kingdom of heaven. I take some miserable child here in this city, squalid in dress and look, ignorant and wicked too as most men judge of vagrant vice, made so by circumstances over which that child had no control; I turn off with a shudder at the public wrong we have done and still are doing; but in that child I see proof of another world, yes, Heaven glittering from behind those saddened eyes. I know that child has a man's nature in him, perhaps a Channing's trusting piety; perhaps a Newton's mind; has surely rudiments of more than these; for what were Channing, Newton, both of them, but embryo men? I turn off with a shudder at the public wrong, but a faith in God's justice, in that child's eternal life, which nothing can ever shake.

III. A third argument is drawn from the nature of God. He, as the infinite, the unconditioned, the absolute, is all-powerful, all-wise, all-good. Therefore he must wish the best of all possible things; must know the best of all possible things; must will the best of all possible things, and so bring it to pass. Life is a possible thing; eternal life is possible. Neither implies a contradiction; yes, to me they seem necessary, more than possible. Now, then, as life, serene and happy life, is better than non-existence, so immortality is better than perpetual death. God must know that, wish that, will that, and so bring that about. Man, therefore, must be immortal. This argument is brief indeed, but I see not how it can be withstood.

I do not know that one of you doubts of eternal life. If any does, I know not if these thoughts will ever affect his doubt. Still I think each argument is powerful; to one that thinks, reasons, balances, and then decides, exceeding powerful. All put together form a mass of argument which, as it seems to me, no logic can resist. Yet I beg you to understand that I do not rest immortality on any reasoning of mine, but on reason itself; not on these logical arguments, but on man's consciousness, and the instinctive belief which is common to the human race. I

believed my immortality before I proved it; believed it just as strongly then as now. Nay, could some doubter rise, and, to my thinking, vanquish all these arguments, I should still hold fast my native faith, nor fear the doubter's arms. The simple consciousness of men is stronger than all forms of proof. Still, if men want arguments—why, there they are.

The belief in immortality is one thing; the special form thereof, the definite notion of the future life, another and quite different. The popular doctrine in our churches I think is this: That this body which we lay in the dust shall one day be raised again, the living soul joined on anew, and both together live the eternal life. But where is the soul all this time, between our death-day and our day of rising? Some say it sleeps unconscious, dead all this time; others, that it is in heaven now, or else in hell; others, in a strange and transient home, imperfect in its joy or woe, waiting the final day and more complete account. It seems to me this notion is absurd and impossible: absurd in its doctrine relative to the present condition of departed souls; impossible in what it teaches of the resurrection of this body. If my soul is to claim the body again, which shall it be, the body I was born into, or that I died out of? If I live to the common age of men, changing my body as I must, and dying daily, then I have worn some eight or ten bodies. So at the last, which body shall claim my soul, for the ten had her? The soul herself may claim them all. But to make the matter still more intricate, there is in the earth but a certain portion of matter out of which human bodies can be made. Considering all the millions of men now living, the myriads of millions that have been before, it is plain, I think, that all the matter suitable for human bodies has been lived over many times. So if the world were to end to-day, instead of each old man having ten bodies from which to choose the one that fits him best, there would be ten men, all clamouring for each body! Shall I then have a handful of my former dust, and that alone? That is not the resurrection of my former body. This whole doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh seems to me impossible and absurd.

I know men refer this, as many other things no better, to Jesus. I find no satisfactory evidence that he taught the resurrection of the body; there is some evidence that he did not. I know it was the doctrine of the Pharisees of his time, of Paul, the early Christians, and more or less of the Christian churches to this day. In Christ's time in Judea, there were the Sadducees, who taught the eternal death of men; the Pharisees, who taught the resurrection of the flesh and its reunion with the soul; the Essenes, who taught the immortality of the soul, but rejected the resurrection of the body. Paul was a Pharisee, and in his letters taught the resurrection of the dead, the belief of the Pharisees. From him it has come down to us, and in the creed of many churches it is still written, "I believe in the resurrection of the flesh." Many doubted this in early times, but the council of Nice declared all men accursed who dared to doubt the resurrection of the flesh. I mention this as absurd and impossible, because it is, still, I fear, the popular belief, and lest some should confound the doctrine of immortality with this tenet of the Pharisees. Let it be remembered the immortality of the soul is one thing, the resurrection of the body another and quite different.

What is this future life? what can we know of it besides its existence? Some men speak as if they knew the way around heaven as around the wards of their native city. What we can know in detail is cautiously to be inferred from the nature of man and the nature of God. I will modestly set down what it seems to me.

It must be a conscious state. Man is by his nature conscious; yes, self-conscious. He is progressive in his self-consciousness. I cannot think a removal out of the body destroys this consciousness; rather that it enhances and intensifies this. Yet consciousness in the next life must differ as much from consciousness here as the ripe peach differs from the blossom, or the bud, or the bark, or the earthly materials out of which it grew. The child is no limit to the man, nor my consciousness now to what I may be, must be hereafter.

It must be a social state. Our nature is social; our joys social. For our progress here, our happiness, we depend

on one another. Must it not be so there? It must be an advance upon our nature and condition here. All the analogy of nature teaches that. Things advance from small to great; from base to beautiful. The girl grows into a woman; the bud swells into the blossom, that into the fruit. The process over, the work begins anew. How much more must it be so in the other life. What old powers we shall discover now buried in the flesh, what new powers shall come upon us in that new state, no man can know; it were but poetic idleness to talk of them. We see in some great man, what power of intellect, imagination, justice, goodness, piety, he reveals, lying latent in us all. How men bungle in their works of art! No Raphael can paint a dew-drop or a flake of frost. Yet some rude man, tired with his work, lies down beneath a tree, his head upon his swarthy arm, and sleep shuts, one by one, these five scant portals of the soul, and what an artist is he made at once! How brave a sky he paints above him, with what golden garniture of clouds set off; what flowers and trees, what men and women, does he not create, and moving in celestial scenes! What years of history does he condense in one short minute, and when he wakes, shakes off the purple drapery of his dream as if it were but worthless dust and girds him for his work anew! What other powers there are shut up in men less known than this artistic phantasy; powers of seeing the distant, recalling the past, predicting the future, feeling at once the character of men—of this we know little, only by rare glimpses at the unwonted side of things. But yet we know enough to guess there are strange wonders there waiting to be revealed.

What form our conscious, social, and increased activity shall take, we know not. We know of that no more than before our birth we knew of this world, of sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch, or the things which they reveal. We are not born into that world, have not its senses yet. This we know, that the same God, all-powerful, all-wise, all-good, rules there and then, as here and now. Who cannot trust him to do right and best for all? For my own part, I feel no wish to know how, or where, or what I shall be hereafter. I know it will be right for my truest welfare; for the good of all. I am satisfied with this trust.

Yet the next life must be a state of retribution. Thither we carry nothing but ourselves, our naked selves. Our fortune we leave behind us; our honours and rank return to such as gave; even our reputation, the good or ill men thought we were, clings to us no more. We go thither without our staff or scrip; nothing but the man we are. Yet that man is the result of all life's daily work; it is the one thing which we have brought to pass. I cannot believe men who have voluntarily lived mean, little, vulgar, and selfish lives, will go out of this and into that, great, noble, generous, good, and holy. Can the practical saint and the practical hypocrite enter on the same course of being together? I know the sufferings of bad men here, the wrong they do their nature, and what comes of that wrong. I think that suffering is the best part of sin, the medicine to heal it with. What men suffer here from their wrong-doing is its natural consequence; but all that suffering is a mercy, designed to make them better. Everything in this world is adapted to promote the welfare of God's creatures. Must it not be so in the next? How many men seem wicked from our point of view, who are not so from their own; how many become infamous through no fault of theirs; the victims of circumstances, born into crime, of low and corrupt parents, whom former circumstances made corrupt! Such men cannot be sinners before God. Here they suffer from the tyranny of appetites they never were taught to subdue; they have not the joy of a cultivated mind. The children of the wild Indian are capable of the same cultivation as children here; yet they are savages. Is it always to be so? Is God to be partial in granting the favours of another life? I cannot believe it. I doubt not that many a soul rises up from the dungeon and the gallows, yes, from dens of infamy amongst men, clean and beautiful before God. Christ, says the Gospel, assured the penitent thief of sharing heaven with him—and that day. Many seem inferior to me, who in God's sight must be far before me; men who now seem too low to learn of me here, may be too high to teach me there.

I cannot think the future world is to be feared, even by the worst of men. I had rather die a sinner than live one. Doubtless justice is there to be done; that may seem stern

and severe. But remember God's justice is not like a man's; it is not vengeance, but mercy; not poison, but medicine. To me it seems tuition more than chastisement. God is not the Jailer of the Universe, but the Shepherd of the people; not the Hangman of mankind, but their Physician; yes, our Father. I cannot fear Him as I fear men. I cannot fail to love. I abhor sin, I loathe and nauseate thereat; most of all at my own. I can plead for others and extenuate their guilt, perhaps they for mine; not I for my own. I know God's justice will overtake me, giving me what I have paid for. But I do not, cannot fear it. I know His justice is love; that if I suffer, it is for my everlasting joy. I think this is a natural state of mind. I do not find that men ever dread the future life, or turn pale on their deathbed at thought of God's vengeance, except when a priesthood has frightened them to that. The world's literature, which is the world's confession, proves what I say. In Greece, in classic days, when there was no caste of priests, the belief in immortality was current and strong. But in all her varied literature I do not remember a man dying, yet afraid of God's vengeance. The rude Indian of our native land did not fear to meet the Great Spirit, face to face. I have sat by the bedside of wicked men, and while death was dealing with my brother, I have watched the tide slow ebbing from the shore, but I have known no one afraid to go. Say what we will, there is nothing stronger and deeper in men than confidence in God, a solemn trust that He will do us good. Even the worst man thinks God his Father; and is he not? Tell me not of God's vengeance, punishing men for his own glory! There is no such thing. Talk not to me of endless hell, where men must suffer for suffering's sake, be damned for an eternity of woe. I tell you there is no such thing, nor can there ever be. Does not even the hireling shepherd, when a single lamb has gone astray, leave the ninety and nine safe in their fold, go forth some stormy night and seek the wanderer, rejoicing to bring home the lost one on his shoulders? And shall God forget His child, his frailest or most stubborn child; leave him in endless misery, a prey to insatiate Sin, that grim, bloodthirsty wolf, prowling about the human fold? I tell you No; not God. Why, this eccentric earth forsakes the sun awhile, careering fast

and far away, but that attractive power prevails at length, and the returning globe comes rounding home again. Does a mortal mother desert her son, wicked, corrupt, and loathsome though he be? If so, the wiser world cries, Shame! But she does not. When her child becomes loathsome and hateful to the world, drunk with wickedness, and when the wicked world puts him away out of its sight, strangling him to death, that mother forgets not her child. She had his earliest kiss from lips all innocent of coming ill, and she will have his last. Yes, she will press his cold and stiffened form to her own bosom; the bosom that bore and fed the innocent babe yearns yet with mortal longing for the murdered murderer. Infamous to the world, his very dust is sacred dust to her. She braves the world's reproach, buries her son, piously hoping, that as their lives once mingled, so their ashes shall. The world, cruel and forgetful oft, honours the mother in its deepest heart. Do you tell me that culprit's mother loves her son more than God can love him? Then go and worship her. I know that when father and mother both forsake me, in the extremity of my sin, I know my God loves on. Oh yes, ye sons of men, Indian and Greek, ye are right to trust your God. Do priests and their churches say No!—bid them go and be silent for ever. No grain of dust gets lost from off this dusty globe; and shall God lose a man from off this sphere of souls? Believe it not.

I know that suffering follows sin, lasting long as the sin. I thank God it is so; that God's own angel stands there to warn back the erring Balaams, wandering towards woe. But God, who sends the rain, the dew, the sun, on me as on a better man, will, at last, I doubt it not, make us all pure, all just, all good, and so, at last, all happy. This follows from the nature of God himself, for the All-good must wish the welfare of His child; the All-wise know how to achieve that welfare; the All-powerful bring it to pass. Tell me He wishes not the eternal welfare of all men, then I say, That is not the God of the universe. I own not that as God. Nay, I tell you it is not God you speak of, but some heathen fancy, smoking up from your unhuman heart. I would ask the worst of mothers, Did you forsake your child because he went astray, and mocked your word? "Oh no," she says; "he was but a child, he knew no

better, and I led him right, corrected him for his good, not mine!" Are we not all children before God; the wisest, oldest, wickedest, God's child! I am sure He will never forsake me, how wicked soever I become. I know that He is love; love, too, that never fails. I expect to suffer for each conscious, wilful wrong; I wish, I hope, I long to suffer for it. I am wronged if I do not; what I do not outgrow, live over and forget here, I hope to expiate there. I fear a sin; not to outgrow a sin.

A man who has lived here a manly life, must enter the next under the most favourable circumstances. I do not mean a man of mere negative goodness, starting in the road of old custom, with his wheels deep in the ruts, not having life enough to go aside, but a positively good man, one bravely good. He has lived heaven here, and must enter higher up than a really wicked man, or a slothful one, or one but negatively good. He can go from earth to heaven, as from one room to another, pass gradually, as from winter to spring. To such an one, no revolution appears needed. The next life, it seems, must be a continual progress, the improvement of old powers, the disclosure or accession of new ones. What nobler reach of thought, what profounder insight, what more heavenly imagination, what greater power of conscience, faith, and love, will bless us there and then, it were vain to calculate, it is far beyond our span. You see men now, whose souls are one with God, and so His will works through them as the magnetic fire runs on along the unimpeding line. What happiness they have, it is they alone can say. How much greater must it be there; not even they can tell. Here the body helps us to some things. Through these five small loopholes the world looks in. How much more does the body hinder us from seeing? Through the sickly body yet other worlds look in. He who has seen only the daylight, knows nothing of that heaven of stars, which all night long hang over head their lamps of gold. When death has dusted off this body from me, who will dream for me the new powers I shall possess? It were vain to try. Time shall reveal it all.

I cannot believe that any state in heaven is a final state, only a condition of progress. The bud opens into the

blossom, the flower matures into the fruit. The salvation of to-day is not blessedness enough for to-morrow. Here we are first babes of earth, with a few senses, and those imperfect, helpless, and ignorant; then children of earth; then youths; then men, armed with reason, conscience, affection, piety, and go on enlarging these without end. So methinks it must be there, that we shall be first babes of heaven, then children, next youths, and so go on growing, advancing and advancing—our being only a becoming more and more, with no possibility of ever reaching the end. If this be true, then there must be a continual increase of being. So, in some future age, the time will come when each one of us shall have more mind, and heart, and soul, than Christ on earth; more than all men now on earth have ever had; yes, more than they and all the souls of men now passed to heaven;—shall have, each one of us, more being than they all have had, and so more truth, more soul, more faith, more rest and bliss of life.

Do men of the next world look in upon this? Are they present with us, conscious of our deeds or thoughts? Who knows? Who can say ay or no? The unborn know nothing of the life on earth; yet the born of earth know somewhat of them, and make ready for their coming. Who knows but men born to heaven are waiting for your birth to come—have gone to prepare a place for us? All that is fancy, and not fact; it is not philosophy, but poetry; no more. Of this we may be sure, that what is best will be; what best for saint or sinner; what most conducive to their real good. That is no poetry, but unavoidable truth, which all mankind may well believe.

There are many who never attained their true stature here, yet without blameworthiness of theirs; men cheated of their growth. Many a Milton walks on his silent way, and goes down at last, not singing and unsung. How many a possible Newton or Descartes has dug the sewers of a city, and dies, giving no sign of the wealthy soul he bore!

> "Chill penury repressed his noble rage,
> And froze the genial current of the soul."

What if the best of you had been born slaves in North

Carolina, or among savages at New Zealand; nay, in some of the filthy cellars of Boston, and turned friendless into the streets; what might you have become? Surely not what you are; yet, before God, you might, perhaps, be more deserving, and, at death, go to a far higher place. What is so terribly wrong here, must be righted there. It cannot be that God will thrust a man out of heaven, because his mother was a savage, a slave, a pauper, or a criminal. It is men's impiety which does so here, not Heaven's justice there! How the wrong shall be righted I know not, care not now to know; of the fact I ask no further certainty. Many that are last shall be first. It may be that the pirate, in heaven, having outgrown his earthly sins, shall teach justice to the judge who hanged him here. They who were oppressed and trampled on, kept down, dwarfed, stinted and emaciate in soul, must have justice done them there, and will doubtless stand higher in heaven than we, who, having many talents, used them poorly, or hid them idle in the dirt, knowing our Father's will, yet heeding not. It was Jesus that said, Many shall come from the east and the west, and sit down in the kingdom of God, and men calling themselves saints be thrust out.

Shall we remember the deeds of the former life; this man that he picked rags out of the mud in the streets, and another that he ruled nations? Who can tell; nay, who need care to ask? Such a remembrance seems not needed for retribution's sake. The oak remembers not each leaf it ever bore, though each helped to form the oak, its branch and bole. How much has gone from our bodies! we know not how it came or went! How much of our past life is gone from our memory, yet its result lives in our character! The saddler remembers not every stitch he took while an apprentice, yet each stitch helped to form the saddle.

Shall we know our friends again? For my own part I cannot doubt it; least of all when I drop a tear over their recent dust. Death does not separate them from us here. Can life in heaven do it? They live in our remembrance; memory rakes in the ashes of the dead, and the virtues of the departed flame up anew, enlightening the dim cold

walls of our consciousness. Much of our joy is social here; we only half enjoy an undivided good. God made mankind, but sundered that into men, that they might help one another. Must it not be so there, and we be with our real friends? Man loves to think it; yet to trust is wiser than to prophesy. But the girl who went from us a little one may be as parent to her father when he comes, and the man who left us have far outgrown our dream of an angel when we meet again. I cannot doubt that many a man who not long ago left his body here, now far surpasses the radiant manliness which Jesus won and wore; yes, is far better, greater, too, than many poorly conceive of God.

There are times when we think little of a future life. In a period of success, serene and healthy life; the day's good is good enough for that day. But there comes a time when this day's good is not enough; its ill too great to bear. When death comes down and wrenches off a friend from our side; wife, child, brother, father, a dear one taken; this life is not enough. Oh, no, not to the coldest, coarsest, and most sensual man. I put it to you, to the most heartless of you all, or the most cold and doubting—When you lay down in the earth your mother, sister, wife, or child, remembering that you shall see their face no more, is life enough? Do you not reach out your arms for heaven, for immortality, and feel you cannot die? When I see men at a feast, or busy in the street, I do not think of their eternal life; perhaps feel not my own. But when the stiffened body goes down to the tomb, sad, silent, remorseless, I feel there is no death for the man. That clod which yonder dust shall cover is not my brother. The dust goes to its place, the man to his own. It is then I feel my immortality. I look through the grave into heaven. I ask no miracle, no proof, no reasoning for me. I ask no risen dust to teach me immortality. I am conscious of eternal life.

But there are worse hours than these: seasons bitterer than death, sorrows that lie a latent poison in the heart, slowly sapping the foundations of our peace. There are hours when the best life seems a sheer failure to the man who lived it, his wisdom folly, his genius impotence, his best deed poor and small; when he wonders why he was

suffered to be born; when all the sorrows of the world seem poured upon him; when he stands in a populous loneliness, and though weak, can only lean in upon himself. In such hour he feels the insufficiency of this life. It is only his cradle-time, he counts himself just born; all honours, wealth, and fame are but baubles in his baby hand; his deep philosophy but nursery rhymes. Yet he feels the immortal fire burning in his heart. He stretches his hands out from the swaddling-clothes of flesh, reaching after the topmost star, which he sees, or dreams he sees, and longs to go alone. Still worse, the consciousness of sin comes over him; he feels that he has insulted himself. All about him seems little; himself little, yet clamouring to be great. Then we feel our immortality; through the gairish light of day we see a star or two beyond. The soul within us feels her wings, contending to be born, impatient for the sky, and wrestles with the earthly worm that folds us in.

"Mysterious Night! when our first Parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came;
And lo, Creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun? or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?"

I would not slight this wondrous world. I love its day and night. Its flowers and its fruits are dear to me. I would not wilfully lose sight of a departing cloud. Every year opens new beauty in a star; or in a purple gentian fringed with loveliness. The laws too of matter seem more wonderful the more I study them, in the whirling eddies of the dust, in the curious shells of former life buried by thousands in a grain of chalk, or in the shining diagrams of light above my head. Even the ugly becomes beautiful when truly seen. I see the jewel in the bunchy toad. The more I live, the more I love this lovely world; feel more its Author in each little thing; in all that is great. But yet I feel my immortality the more. In childhood the

consciousness of immortal life buds forth feeble, though full of promise. In the man it unfolds its fragrant petals, his most celestial flower, to mature its seed throughout eternity. The prospect of that everlasting life, the perfect justice yet to come, the infinite progress before us, cheer and comfort the heart. Sad and disappointed, full of self-reproach, we shall not be so for ever. The light of heaven breaks upon the night of trial, sorrow, sin; the sombre clouds which overhung the east, grown purple now, tell us the dawn of heaven is coming in. Our faces, gleamed on by that, smile in the new-born glow; we are beguiled of our sadness before we are aware. The certainty of this provokes us to patience, it forbids us to be slothfully sorrowful. It calls us to be up and doing. The thought that all will at last be right with the slave, the poor, the weak, and the wicked, inspires us with zeal to work for them here, and make it all right for them even now.

There is small merit in being willing to die; it seems almost sinful in a good man to wish it when the world needs him here so much. It is weak and unmanly to be always looking and sighing voluptuously for that. But it is of great comfort to have in your soul a sure trust in immortality; of great value here and now to anticipate time and live to-day the eternal life. That we may all do. The joys of heaven will begin as soon as we attain the character of heaven and do its duties. That may begin to-day. It is everlasting life to know God, to have His Spirit dwelling in you, yourself at one with Him. Try that and prove its worth. Justice, usefulness, wisdom, religion, love, are the best things we hope for in heaven. Try them on—they will fit you here not less becomingly. They are the best things of earth. Think no outlay of goodness and piety too great. You will find your reward begin here. As much goodness and piety, so much heaven. Men will not pay you—God will; pay you now; pay you hereafter and for ever.

THE TRUE IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

A DISCOURSE AT THE INSTALLATION OF THEODORE PARKER AS MINISTER OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN BOSTON, JANUARY 4, 1846.

For nearly a year we have assembled within these walls from week to week,—I think not idly; I know you have not come for any trivial end. You have recently made a formal organization of yourselves or religous action. To-day, at your request, I enter regularly on a ministry in the midst of you. What are we doing; what do we design to do? We are here to establish a Christian church; and a Christian church, as I understand it, is a body of men and women united together in a common desire of religious excellence and with a common regard for Jesus of Nazareth, regarding him as the noblest example of morality and religion,—as the model, therefore, in this respect for us. Such a church may have many rites, as our Catholic brothers, or but few rites, as our Protestant brothers, or no rites at all, as our brothers the Friends. It may be, nevertheless, a Christian church; for the essential of substance, which makes it a religious body, is the union for the purpose of cultivating love to God and man; and the essential of form, which makes it a Christian body, is the common regard for Jesus, considered as the highest representative of God that we know. It is not the form, either of ritual or of doctrine, but the spirit which constitutes a Christian church. A staff may sustain an old man, or a young man may bear it in his hands as a toy, but walking is walking, though the man have no staff for ornament or support. A Christian spirit may exist under rituals and

doctrines the most diverse. It were hard to say a man is not a Christian, because he believes in the doctrine of the Trinity, or the Pope, while Jesus taught no such doctrine; foolish to say one is no Christian because he denies the existence of a Devil, though Jesus believed it. To make a man's Christian name depend on a belief of all that is related by the numerous writers in the Bible, is as absurd as to make that depend on a belief in all the words of Luther, or Calvin, or St Augustine. It is not for me to say a man is not theoretically a Christian because he believes that Slavery is a Divine and Christian institution; that War is grateful to God—saying, with the Old Testament, that God himself "is a man of war," who teaches men to fight, and curses such as refuse;—or because he believes that all men are born totally depraved, and the greater part of them are to be damned everlastingly by "a jealous God," who is "angry with the wicked every day," and that the few are to be "saved" only because God unjustly punished an innocent man for their sake. I will not say a man is not a Christian though he believe all the melancholy things related of God in some parts of the Old Testament, yet I know few doctrines so hostile to real religion as these have proved themselves. In our day it has strangely come to pass that a little sect, themselves hooted at and called "Infidels" by the rest of Christendom, deny the name of Christian to such as publicly reject the miracles of the Bible. Time will doubtless correct this error. Fire is fire, and ashes ashes, say what we may; each will work after its kind. Now if Christianity be the absolute religion, it must allow all beliefs that are true, and it may exist and be developed in connection with all forms consistent with the absolute religion, and the degree thereof represented by Jesus.

The action of a Christian church seems to be twofold: first on its own members, and then, through their means, on others out of its pale. Let a word be said of each in its order. If I were to ask you why you came here today; why you have often come to this house hitherto?—the serious amongst you would say: That we might become better; more manly; upright before God and downright before men; that we might be Christians, men good and pious after the fashion Jesus spoke of. The first design of such

a church then is to help ourselves become Christians. Now the substance of Christianity is Piety—Love to God, and Goodness—Love to men. It is a religion, the germs whereof are born in your heart, appearing in your earliest childhood: which are developed just in proportion as you become a man, and are indeed the standard measure of your life. As the primeval rock lies at the bottom of the sea and appears at the top of the loftiest mountains, so in a finished character religion underlies all and crowns all. Christianity, to be perfect and entire, demands a complete manliness; the development of the whole man, mind, conscience, heart, and soul. It aims not to destroy the sacred peculiarities of individual character. It cherishes and developes them in their perfection, leaving Paul to be Paul, not Peter, and John to be John, not Jude nor James. We are born different, into a world where unlike things are gathered together, that there may be a special work for each. Christianity respects this diversity in men, aiming not to undo but further God's will; not fashioning all men after one pattern, to think alike, act alike, be alike, even look alike. It is something far other than Christianity which demands that. A Christian church then should put no fetters on the man; it should have unity of purpose, but with the most entire freedom for the individual. When you sacrifice the man to the mass in church or state, church or state becomes an offence, a stumbling-block in the way of progress, and must end or mend. The greater the variety of individualities in church or state, the better is it, so long as all are really manly, humane, and accordant. A church must needs be partial, not catholic, where all men think alike, narrow and little. Your church-organ, to have compass and volume, must have pipes of various sound, and the skilful artist destroys none, but tunes them all to harmony; if otherwise, he does not understand his work. In becoming Christians let us not cease to be men; nay, we cannot be Christians unless we are men first. It were unchristian to love Christianity better than the truth, or Christ better than man.

But Christianity is not only the absolute religion; it has also the ideal-man. In Jesus of Nazareth it gives us, in a certain sense, the model of religious excellence. It is a great thing to have the perfect idea of religion; to have

also that idea made real, satisfactory to the wants of any age, were a yet further greatness. A Christian church should aim to have its members Christians as Jesus was the Christ; sons of man as he was; sons of God as much as he. To be that it is not needful to observe all the forms he complied with, only such forms as help you; not needful to have all the thoughts that he had, only such thoughts as are true. If Jesus were ever mistaken, as the Evangelists make it appear, then it is a part of Christianity to avoid his mistakes as well as to accept his truths. It is the part of a Christian church to teach men so; to stop at no man's limitations; to prize no word so high as truth; no man so dear as God. Jesus came not to fetter men, but free them.

Jesus is a model-man in this respect: that he stands in a true relation to men, that of forgiveness for their ill-treatment, service for their needs, trust in their nature, and constant love towards them,—towards even the wicked and hypocritical; in a true relation to God, that of entire obedience to Him, of perfect trust in Him, of love towards Him with the whole mind, heart, and soul; and love of God is also love of truth, goodness, usefulness, love of Love itself. Obedience to God and trust in God is obedience to these things and trust in them. If Jesus had loved any opinion better than truth, then had he lost that relation to God, and so far ceased to be inspired by Him; had he allowed any partial feeling to overcome the spirit of universal love, then also he had sundered himself from God, and been at discord, not in harmony with the Infinite.

If Jesus be the model-man, then should a Christian church teach its members to hold the same relation to God that Christ held; to be one with Him; incarnations of God, as much and as far as Jesus was one with God, and an incarnation thereof, a manifestation of God in the flesh. It is Christian to receive all the truths of the Bible; all the truths that are not in the Bible just as much. It is Christian also to reject all the errors that come to us from without the Bible or from within the Bible. The Christian man, or the Christian church, is to stop at no man's limitation; at the limit of no book. God is not dead, nor even asleep, but awake and alive as ever of old; He inspires

men now no less than beforetime; is ready to fill your mind, heart, and soul with truth, love, life, as to fill Moses and Jesus, and that on the same terms; for inspiration comes by universal laws, and not by partial exceptions. Each point of spirit, as each atom of space, is still bathed in the tides of Deity. But all good men, all Christian men, all inspired men, will be no more alike than all wicked men. It is the same light which is blue in the sky and golden in the sun. "All nature's difference makes all nature's peace."

We can attain this relation to man and God only on condition that we are free. If a church cannot allow freedom it were better not to allow itself, but cease to be. Unity of purpose, with entire freedom for the individual, should be the motto. It is only free men that can find the truth, love the truth, live the truth. As much freedom as you shut out, so much falsehood do you shut in. It is a poor thing to purchase unity of church-action at the cost of individual freedom. The Catholic church tried it, and you see what came thereof: science forsook it, calling it a den of lies. Morality forsook it, as the mystery of iniquity; and religion herself protested against it, as the mother of abominations. The Protestant churches are trying the same thing, and see whither they tend and what foes rise up against them,—Philosophy with its Bible of nature, and Religion with its Bible of man, both the hand-writing of God. The great problem of church and state is this: To produce unity of action and yet leave individual freedom not disturbed; to balance into harmonious proportions the mass and the man, the centripetal and centrifugal powers, as, by God's wondrous, living mechanism, they are balanced in the worlds above. In the state we have done this more wisely than any nation heretofore. In the churches it remains yet to do. But man is equal to all which God appoints for him. His desires are ever proportionate to his duty and his destinies. The strong cry of the nations for liberty, a craving as of hungry men for bread and water, shows what liberty is worth, and what it is destined to do. Allow freedom to think, and there will be truth; freedom to act, and we shall have heroic works; freedom to live and be, and we shall have love to men and love to God. The world's history proves that,

and our own history. Jesus, our model-man, was the freest the world ever saw!

Let it be remembered that every truth is of God, and will lead to good and good only. Truth is the seed whereof welfare is the fruit; for every grain thereof we plant some one shall reap a whole harvest of welfare. A lie is "of the Devil," and must lead to want, and woe, and death, ending at last in a storm where it rains tears and perhaps blood. Have freedom, and you will sow new truth to reap its satisfaction; submit to thraldom, and you sow lies to reap the death they bear. A Christian church should be the home of the soul, where it enjoys the largest liberty of the sons of God. If fettered elsewhere, here let us be free. Christ is the liberator; he came not to drive slaves, but to set men free. The churches of old did their greatest work, when there was most freedom in those churches.

Here too should the spirit of devotion be encouraged; the soul of man communing with his God in aspirations after purity and truth, in resolutions for goodness, and piety, and a manly life. These are a prayer. The fact that men freely hold truths in common, great truths and universal; that unitedly they lift up their souls to God seeking instruction of Him; this will prove the strongest bond between man and man. It seems to me that the Protestant churches have not fully done justice to the sentiment of worship; that in taking care of the head we have forgotten the heart. To think truth is the worship of the head; to do noble works of usefulness and charity the worship of the will; to feel love and trust in man and God is the glad worship of the heart. A Christian church should be broad enough for all; should seek truth and promote piety, that both together might toil in good works.

Here should be had the best instruction which can be commanded; the freest, truest, and most manly voice; the mind most conversant with truth; the eloquence of a heart that runs over with goodness, whose faith is unfaltering in truth, justice, purity, and love; a faith in God, whose charity is living love to men, even the sinful and the base. Teaching is the breathing of one man's inspiration into another, a most real thing amongst real men. In a church there should be instruction for the young.

God appoints the father and mother the natural teachers of children; above all is it so in their religious culture. But there are some who cannot, many who will not, fulfil this trust. Hence it has been found necessary for wise and good men to offer their instruction to such. In this matter it is religion we need more than theology, and of this it is not mere traditions and mythologies we are to teach, the anile tales of a rude people in a dark age, things our pupils will do well to forget soon as they are men, and which they will have small reason to thank us for obscuring their minds withal; but it is the great, everlasting truths of religion which should be taught, enforced by examples of noble men, which tradition tells of, or the present age affords, all this to be suited to the tender years of the child. Christianity should be represented as human, as man's nature in its true greatness; religion shown to be beautiful, a real duty corresponding to man's deepest desire, that as religion affords the deepest satisfaction to man, so it is man's most universal want. Christ should be shown to men as he was, the manliest of men, the most divine because the most human. Children should be taught to respect their nature; to consider it as the noblest of all God's works; to know that perfect truth and goodness are demanded of them, and by that only can they be worthy men; taught to feel that God is present in Boston, and to-day, as much as ever in Jerusalem in the time of Jesus. They should be taught to abhor the public sins of our times, but to love and imitate its great examples of nobleness and practical religion, which stand out amid the mob of worldly pretenders in this day.

Then, too, if one of our members falls into unworthy ways, is it not the duty of some one to speak with him, not as with authority to command, but with affection to persuade? Did any one of you ever address an erring brother on the folly of his ways with manly tenderness, and try to charm him back, and find a cold repulse? If a man is in error he will be grateful to one that tells him so; will learn most from men who make him ashamed of his littleness of life. In this matter it seems many a good man comes short of his duty.

There is yet another way in which a church should act on its own household, and that is by direct material help

in time of need. There is the eternal distinction of the strong and the weak, which cannot be changed. But as things now go there is another inequality, not of God's appointment, but of man's perversity, the distinction of rich and poor—of men bloated by superfluous wealth and men starving and freezing from want. You know and I know how often the strong abuse their strength, exerting it solely for themselves and to the ruin of the weak; we all know that such are reckoned great in the world, though they may have grown rich solely by clutching at what others earned. In Christianity, and before the God of justice, all men are brothers; the strong are so that they may help the weak. As a nation chooses its wisest men to manage its affairs for the nation's good, and not barely their own, so God endows Charles or Samuel with great gifts that they may also bless all men thereby. If they use those powers solely for their pleasure, then are they false before men; false before God. It is said of the church of the Friends that no one of their number has ever received the charity of an almshouse, or for a civil offence been shut up in a jail. If the poor forsake a church, be sure that the church forsook God long before.

But the church must have an action on others out of its pale. If a man or a society of men have a truth, they hold it not for themselves alone, but for all men. The solitary thinker, who in a moment of ecstatic action in his closet at midnight discovers a truth, discovers it for all the world and for eternity. A Christian church ought to love to see its truths extend; so it should put them in contact with the opinions of the world, not with excess of zeal or lack of charity.

A Christian church should be a means of reforming the world, of forming it after the pattern of Christian ideas. It should therefore bring up the sentiments of the times, the ideas of the times, and the actions of the times, to judge them by the universal standard. In this way it will learn much and be a living church, that grows with the advance of men's sentiments, ideas, and actions, and while it keeps the good of the past will lose no brave spirit of the present day. It can teach much; now moderating the fury of men, then quickening their sluggish steps.

We expect the sins of commerce to be winked at in the street; the sins of the state to be applauded on election days and in a Congress, or on the fourth of July; we are used to hear them called the righteousness of the nation. There they are often measured by the avarice or the ambition of greedy men. You expect them to be tried by passion, which looks only to immediate results and partial ends. Here they are to be measured by Conscience and Reason, which look to permanent results and universal ends; to be looked at with reference to the Laws of God, the everlasting ideas on which alone is based the welfare of the world. Here they are to be examined in the light of Christianity itself. If the church be true, many things which seem gainful in the street and expedient in the senate-house, will here be set down as wrong, and all gain which comes therefrom seen to be but a loss. If there be a public sin in the land, if a lie invade the state, it is for the church to give the alarm; it is here that it may war on lies and sins; the more widely they are believed in and practised, the more are they deadly, the more to be opposed. Here let no false idea or false action of the public go without exposure or rebuke. But let no noble heroism of the times, no noble man, pass by without due honour. If it is a good thing to honour dead saints and the heroism of our fathers; it is a better thing to honour the saints of to-day, the live heroism of men who do the battle, when that battle is all around us. I know a few such saints, here and there a hero of that stamp, and I will not wait till they are dead and classic before I call them so and honour them as such, for

"To side with truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they once denied;
For Humanity sweeps onward; where to-day the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas, with the silver in his hands;
Far in front the cross stands ready, and the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn."

Do you not see that if a man have a new truth, it must be reformatory and so create an outcry? It will seem destructive as the farmer's plough; like that, it is so to tares

and thistles, but the herald of the harvest none the less. In this way a Christian church should be a society for promoting true sentiments and ideas. If it would lead, it must go before men; if it would be looked up to, it must stand high.

That is not all: it should be a society for the promotion of good works. We are all beneath our ideal, and therefore transgressors before God. Yet He gives us the rain, the snow, and the sun. It falls on me as well as on the field of my neighbour, who is a far juster man. How can we repent, cast our own sins behind us, outgrow and forget them, better than by helping others to work out their salvation? We are all brothers before God. Mutually needful we must be; mutually helpful we should be. Here are the ignorant that ask our instruction, not with words only, but with the prayer of their darkness, far more suppliant than speech. I never see an ignorant man younger than myself, without a feeling of self-reproach, for I ask, "What have I been doing to suffer him to grow up in nakedness of mind?" Every man, born in New England, who does not share the culture of this age, is a reproach to more than himself, and will at last actively curse those who began by deserting him. The Christian church should lead the movement for the public education of the people.

Here are the needy who ask not so much your gold, your bread, or your cloth, as they ask also your sympathy, respect, and counsel; that you assist them to help themselves, that they may have gold won by their industry, not begged out of your benevolence. It is justice more than charity they ask. Every beggar, every pauper, born and bred amongst us, is a reproach to us, and condemns our civilization. For how has it come to pass that in a land of abundance here are men, for no fault of their own, born into want, living in want, and dying of want? and that, while we pretend to a religion which says all men are brothers! There is a horrid wrong somewhere.

Here too are the drunkard, the criminal, the abandoned person, sometimes the foe of society, but far oftener the victim of society. Whence come the tenants of our almshouses, jails, the victims of vice in all our towns? Why, from the lowest rank of the people; from the poorest and

most ignorant! Say rather from the most neglected, and the public sin is confessed, and the remedy hinted at. What have the strong been doing all this while, that the weak have come to such a state? Let them answer for themselves.

Now for all these ought a Christian church to toil. It should be a church of good works; if it is a church of good faith it will be so. Does not Christianity say the strong should help the weak? Does not that mean something? It once did. Has the Christian fire faded out from those words, once so marvellously bright? Look round you, in the streets of your own Boston! See the ignorant, men and women with scarce more than the stature of men and women; boys and girls growing up in ignorance and the low civilization which comes thereof, the barbarians of Boston. Their character will one day be a blot and a curse to the nation, and who is to blame? Why, the ablest and best men, who might have had it otherwise if they would. Look at the poor, men of small ability, weak by nature, born into a weak position, therefore doubly weak; men whom the strong use for their purpose, and then cast them off as we throw away the rind of an orange after we have drunk its generous juice. Behold the wicked, so we call the weak men that are publicly caught in the cobweb of the law; ask why they became wicked; how we have aimed to reform them; what we have done to make them respect themselves, to believe in goodness, in man and God? and then say if there is not something for Christian men to do, something for a Christian church to do! Every almshouse in Massachusetts shows that the churches have not done their duty, that the Christians lie lies when they call Jesus "master" and men "brothers!" Every jail is a monument, on which it is writ in letters of iron that we are still heathens, and the gallows, black and hideous, the embodiment of death, the last argument a "Christian" state offers to the poor wretches it trained up to be criminals, stands there, a sign of our infamy; and while it lifts its horrid arm to crush the life out of some miserable man, whose blood cries to God against Cain in the nineteenth century, it lifts that same arm as an index of our shame.

Is that all? Oh, no! Did not Jesus say, resist not evil

—with evil? Is not war the worst form of that evil; and is there on earth a nation so greedy of war; a nation more reckless of provoking it; one where the war-horse so soon conducts his foolish rider into fame and power? The "Heathen" Chinese might send their missionaries to America, and teach us to love men! Is that all? Far from it. Did not Christ say, whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do you even so unto them; and are there not three million brothers of yours and mine in bondage here, the hopeless sufferers of a savage doom; debarred from the civilization of our age, the barbarians of the nineteenth century; shut out from the pretended religion of Christendom, the heathens of a Christian land; chained down from the liberty unalienable in man, the slaves of a Christian republic? Does not a cry of indignation ring out from every legislature in the North; does not the press war with its million throats, and a voice of indignation go up from East and West, out from the hearts of freemen? Oh, no. There is none of that cry against the mightiest sin of this age. The rock of Plymouth, sanctified by the feet which led a nation's way to freedom's large estate, provokes no more voice than the rottenest stone in all the mountains of the West. The few that speak a manly word for truth and everlasting right, are called fanatics; bid be still, lest they spoil the market! Great God! and has it come to this, that men are silent over such a sin? 'Tis even so. Then it must be that every church which dares assume the name of Christ, that dearest name to men, thunders and lightens on this hideous wrong! That is not so. The church is dumb, while the state is only silent; while the servants of the people are only asleep, "God's ministers" are dead!

In the midst of all these wrongs and sins, the crimes of men, society, and the state, amid popular ignorance, pauperism, crime, and war, and slavery too—is the church to say nothing, do nothing; nothing for the good of such as feel the wrong, nothing to save them who do the wrong? Men tell us so, in word and deed; that way alone is "safe!" If I thought so, I would never enter the church but once again, and then to bow my shoulders to their manliest work, to heave down its strong pillars, arch and dome, and roof and wall, steeple and tower,

though like Samson I buried myself under the ruins of that temple which profaned the worship of God most high, of God most loved. I would do this in the name of man; in the name of Christ I would do it; yea, in the dear and blessed name of God.

It seems to me that a church which dares name itself Christian, the Church of the Redeemer, which aspires to be a true church, must set itself about all this business, and be not merely a chr ' of theology, but of religion; not of faith only, but of ks; a just church by its faith bringing works into li It should not be a church termagant, which only peevishly scolds at sin, in its anile way; but a church militant against every form of evil, which not only censures, but writes out on the walls of the world the brave example of a Christian life, that all may take pattern therefrom. Thus only can it become the church triumphant. If a church were to waste less time in building its palaces of theological speculation, palaces mainly of straw, and based upon the chaff, erecting air-castles and fighting battles to defend those palaces of straw, it would surely have more time to use in the practical good works of the day. If it thus made a city free from want and ignorance and crime, I know I vent a heresy, I think it would be quite as Christian an enterprise, as though it restored all the theology of the dark ages; quite as pleasing to God. A good sermon is a good thing, no doubt, but its end is not answered by its being preached; even by its being listened to and applauded; only by its awakening a deeper life in the hearers. But in the multitude of sermons there is danger lest the bare hearing thereof be thought a religious duty, not a means, but an end, and so our Christianity vanish in words. What if every Sunday afternoon the most pious and manly of our number, who saw fit, resolved themselves into a committee of the whole for practical religion, and held not a formal meeting, but one more free, sometimes for the purpose of devotion, the practical work of making ourselves better Christians, nearer to one another, and sometimes that we might find means to help such as needed help, the poor, the ignorant, the intemperate, and the wicked? Would it not be a work profitable to ourselves, and useful to others weaker than we? For my

own part I think there are no ordinances of religion like good works; no day too sacred to help my brother in; no Christianity like a practical love of God shown by a practical love of men. Christ told us that if we had brought our gift to the very altar, and there remembered our brother had cause of complaint against us, we must leave the divine service, and pay the human service first! If my brother be in slavery, in want, in ignorance, in sin, and I can aid him and do not, he has much against me, and God can better wait for my prayer than my brother for my help!

The saints of olden time perished at the stake; they hung on gibbets; they agonized upon the rack; they died under the steel of the tormentor. It was the heroism of our fathers' day that swam the unknown seas; froze in the woods; starved with want and cold; fought battles with the red right hand. It is the sainthood and heroism of our day that toils for the ignorant, the poor, the weak, the oppressed, the wicked. Yes, it is our saints and heroes who fight fighting; who contend for the slave, and his master too, for the drunkard, the criminal; yes, for the wicked or the weak in all their forms. It is they that with weapons of heavenly proof fight the great battle for the souls of men. Though I detest war in each particular fibre of my heart, yet I honour the heroes among our fathers who fought with bloody hand; peace-makers in a savage way, they were faithful to the light; the most inspired can be no more, and we, with greater light, do, it may be, far less. I love and venerate the saints of old; men who dared step in front of their age; accepted Christianity when it cost something to be a Christian, because it meant something; they applied Christianity, so far as they knew it, to the lies and sins of their times, and won a sudden and a fiery death. But the saints and heroes of this day, who draw no sword, whose right hand is never bloody, who burn in no fires of wood or sulphur, nor languish briefly on the hasty cross; the saints and heroes who, in a worldly world, dare to be men; in an age of conformity and selfishness, speak for Truth and Man, living for noble aims; men who will swear to no lies howsoever popular; who will honour no sins, though never so profitable, respected, and ancient; men who

count Christ not their master, but teacher, friend, brother, and strive like him to practise all they pray; to incarnate and make real the Word of God,—these men I honour far more than the saints of old. I know their trials, I see their dangers, I appreciate their sufferings, and since the day when the man on Calvary bowed his head, bidding persecution farewell with his "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," I find no such saints and heroes as live now! They win hard fare, and hard toil. They lay up shame and obloquy. Theirs is the most painful of martyrdoms. Racks and fagots soon waft the soul to God, stern messengers but swift. A boy could bear that passage, the martyrdom of death. But the temptation of a long life of neglect, and scorn, and obloquy, and shame, and want, and desertion by false friends; to live blameless though blamed, cut off from human sympathy, that is the martyrdom of to-day. I shed no tears for such martyrs. I shout when I see one; I take courage and thank God for the real saints, prophets, and heroes of to-day. In another age, men shall be proud of these puritans and pilgrims of this day. Churches shall glory in their names and celebrate their praise in sermon and in song. Yea, though now men would steal the rusty sword from underneath the bones of a saint or hero long deceased, to smite off therewith the head of a new prophet, that ancient hero's son; though they would gladly crush the heart out of him with the tomb-stones they piled up for great men, dead and honoured now; yet in some future day, that mob, penitent, baptized with a new spirit, like drunken men returned to sanity once more, shall search through all this land for marble white enough to build a monument to that prophet whom their fathers slew; they shall seek through all the world for gold of fineness fit to chronicle such names! I cannot wait; but I will honour such men now, not adjourn the warning of their voice, and the glory of their example, till another age! The church may cast out such men; burn them with the torments of an age too refined in its cruelty to use coarse fagots and the vulgar axe! It is no less to these men; but the ruin of the church. I say the Christian church of the nineteenth century must honour such men, if it would do a church's work; must take

pains to make such men as these, or it is a dead church, with no claim on us, except that we bury it. A true church will always be the church of martyrs. The ancients commenced every great work with a victim! We do not call it so; but the sacrifice is demanded, got ready, and offered by unconscious priests long ere the enterprise succeeds. Did not Christianity begin with a martyrdom?

In this way, by gaining all the truth of the age in thought or action, by trying public opinions with its own brave ideas, by promoting good works, applying a new truth to an old error, and with unpopular righteousness overcoming each popular sin, the Christian church should lead the civilization of the age. The leader looks before, goes before, and knows where he is going; knows the way thither. It is only on this condition that he leads at all. If the church by looking after truth, and receiving it when it comes, be in unison with God, it will be in unison with all science, which is only the thought of God translated from the facts of nature into the words of men. In such a case, the church will not fear philosophy, nor in the face of modern science aim to reëstablish the dreams and fables of a ruder day. It will not lack new truth, daring only to quote, nor be obliged to sneak behind the inspired words of old saints as its only fortress, for it will have words just as truly inspired, dropping from the golden mouths of saints and prophets now. For leaders it will look not back, but forth; will fan the first faint sparkles of that noble fire just newly kindled from the skies; not smother them in the ashes of fires long spent; not quench them with holy water from Jordan or the Nile. A church truly Christian, professing Christ as its model-man, and aiming to stand in the relation he stood, must lead the way in moral enterprises, in every work which aims directly at the welfare of man. There was a time when the Christian churches, as a whole, held that rank. Do they now? Not even the Quakers—perhaps the last sect that abandoned it. A prophet, filled with love of man and love of God, is not therein at home. I speak a sad truth, and I say it in sorrow. But look at the churches of this city: do they lead the Christian movements of this city

—the temperance movement, the peace movement, the movement for the freedom of men, for education, the movement to make society more just, more wise and good, the great religious movement of these times—for, hold down our eyelids as we will, there is a religious movement at this day on foot, such as even New England never saw before; —do they lead in these things? Oh, no, not at all. That great Christian orator, one of the noblest men New England has seen in this century, whose word has even now gone forth to the nations beyond the sea, while his spirit has gone home to his Father, when he turned his attention to the practical evils of our time, and our land, and our civilization, vigorously applying Christianity to life, why he lost favour in his own little sect! They feared him, soon as his spirit looked over their narrow walls, aspiring to lead men to a better work. I know men can now make sectarian capital out of the great name of Channing, so he is praised; perhaps praised loudest by the very men who then cursed him by their gods. Ay, by their gods he was accursed! The churches lead the Christian movements of these times?—why, has there not just been driven out of this city, and out of this State, a man conspicuous in all these movements, after five and twenty years of noble toil; driven out because he was conspicuous in them! You know it is so, and you know how and by whom he is thus driven out! *

Christianity is humanity; Christ is the Son of man; the manliest of men; humane as a woman; pious and hopeful as a prayer; but brave as man's most daring thought. He has led the world in morals and religion for eighteen hundred years, only because he was the manliest man in it; the humanest and bravest in it, and hence the divinest. He may lead it eighteen hundred years more, for we are bid believe that God can never make again a greater man; no, none so great. But the churches do not lead men therein, for they have not his spirit; neither that womanliness which wept over Jerusalem, nor that manliness which drew down fire enough from heaven to light the world's altars for well nigh two thousand years.

There are many ways in which Christ may be denied:— one is that of the bold blasphemer, who, out of a base and

* Rev. John Pierpont.

haughty heart mocks, scoffing at that manly man, and spits upon the nobleness of Christ! There are few such deniers; my heart mourns for them. But they do little harm. Religion is so dear to men, no scoffing word can silence that, and the brave soul of this young Nazarene has made itself so deeply felt that scorn and mockery of him are but an icicle held up against the summer's sun. There is another way to deny him, and that is:—to call him Lord, and never do his bidding; to stifle free minds with his words; and with the authority of his name to cloak, to mantle, screen, and consecrate the follies, errors, sins of men! From this we have much to fear.

The church that is to lead this century will not be a church creeping on all fours; mewling and whining, its face turned down, its eyes turned back. It must be full of the brave, manly spirit of the day, keeping also the good of times past. There is a terrific energy in this age, for man was never so much developed, so much the master of himself before. Great truths, moral and political, have come to light. They fly quickly. The iron prophet of types publishes his visions, of weal or woe, to the near and far. This marvellous age has invented steam, and the magnetic telegraph, apt symbols of itself, before which the miracles of fable are but an idle tale. It demands, as never before, freedom for itself, usefulness in its institutions; truth in its teachings, and beauty in its deeds. Let a church have that freedom, that usefulness, truth, and beauty, and the energy of this age will soon be on its side. But the church which did for the fifth century, or the fifteenth, will not do for this. What is well enough at Rome, Oxford, or Berlin, is not well enough for Boston. It must have our ideas, the smell of our ground, and have grown out of the religion in our soul. The freedom of America must be there before this energy will come; the wisdom of the nineteenth century before its science will be on the churches' side, else that science will go over to the "infidels."

Our churches are not in harmony with what is best in the present age. Men call their temples after their old heroes and saints—John, Paul, Peter, and the like. But we call nothing else after the old names; a school of philosophy would be condemned if called Aristotelian,

Platonic, or even Baconian. We out-travel the past in all but this. In the church it seems taught there is no progress unless we have all the past on our back; so we despair of having men fit to call churches by. We look back and not forward. We think the next saint must talk Hebrew like the old ones, and repeat the same mythology. So when a new prophet comes we only stone him.

A church that believes only in past inspiration will appeal to old books as the standard of truth and source of light; will be antiquarian in its habits; will call its children by the old names; and war on the new age, not understanding the man-child born to rule the world. A church that believes in inspiration now will appeal to God; try things by reason and conscience; aim to surpass the old heroes; baptize its children with a new spirit, and using the present age will lead public opinion, and not follow it. Had Christ looked back for counsel, he might have founded a church fit for Abraham or Isaac to worship in, not for ages to come, or the age then. He that feels he is near to God, does not fear to be far from men; if before, he helps lead them on; if above, to lift them up. Let us get all we can from the Hebrews and others of old time, and that is much; but still let us be God's free men, not the Gibeonites of the past.

Let us have a church that dares imitate the heroism of Jesus; seek inspiration as he sought it; judge the past as he; act on the present like him; pray as he prayed; work as he wrought; live as he lived. Let our doctrines and our forms fit the soul, as the limbs fit the body, growing out of it, growing with it. Let us have a church for the whole man: truth for the mind; good works for the hands; love for the heart; and for the soul, that aspiring after perfection, that unfaltering faith in God which, like lightning in the clouds, shines brightest when elsewhere it is most dark. Let our church fit man, as the heavens fit the earth!

In our day men have made great advances in science, commerce, manufactures, in all the arts of life. We need, therefore, a development of religion corresponding thereto. The leading minds of the age ask freedom to inquire; not

merely to believe, but to know; to rest on facts. A great spiritual movement goes swiftly forward. The best men see that religion is religion; theology is theology, and not religion; that true religion is a very simple affair, and the popular theology a very foolish one; that the Christianity of Christ is not the Christianity of the street, or the state, or the churches; that Christ is not the model-man, only "imputed" as such. These men wish to apply good sense to matters connected with religion; to apply Christianity to life, and make the world a better place, men and women fitter to live in it. In this way they wish to get a theology that is true; a mode of religion that works, and works well. If a church can answer these demands, it will be a live church; leading the civilization of the times, living with all the mighty life of this age, and nation. Its prayers will be a lifting up of the hearts in noble men towards God, in search of truth, goodness, piety. Its sacraments will be great works of reform, institutions for the comfort and the culture of men. Let us have a church in which religion, goodness towards men and piety towards God, shall be the main thing; let us have a degree of that suited to the growth and demands of this age. In the middle ages, men had erroneous conceptions of religion, no doubt; yet the church led the world. When she wrestled with the state, the state came undermost to the ground. See the results of that supremacy—all over Europe there arose the cloister, halls of learning for the chosen few, minster, dome, cathedral, miracles of art, each costing the wealth of a province. Such was the embodiment of their ideas of religion, the prayers of a pious age done in stone, a psalm petrified as it rose from the world's mouth; a poor sacrifice, no doubt, but the best they knew how to offer. Now if men were to engage in religion as in politics, commerce, arts; if the absolute religion, the Christianity of Christ, were applied to life with all the might of this age, as the Christianity of the church was then applied, what a result should we not behold! We should build up a great state with unity in the nation, and freedom in the people; a state where there was honourable work for every hand, bread for all mouths, clothing for all backs, culture for every mind, and love and faith in every heart. Truth would be our sermon, drawn from the oldest of Scriptures,

God's writing there in nature, here in man; works of daily duty would be our sacrament; prophets inspired of God would minister the word, and piety send up her psalm of prayer, sweet in its notes, and joyfully prolonged. The noblest monument to Christ, the fairest trophy of religion, is a noble people, where all are well fed and clad, industrious, free, educated, manly, pious, wise, and good.

Some of you may now remember, how ten months and more ago, I first came to this house to speak. I shall remember it for ever. In those rainy Sundays the very skies looked dark. Some came doubtingly, uncertain, looking around, and hoping to find courage in another's hope. Others came with clear glad face; openly, joyfully, certain they were right; not fearing to meet the issue; not afraid to be seen meeting it. Some came, perhaps, not used to worship in a church, but not the less welcome here; some mistaking me for a destroyer, a doubter, a denier of all truth, a scoffer, an enemy to man and God! I wonder not at that. Misguided men had told you so, in sermon and in song; in words publicly printed and published without shame; in the covert calumny, slyly whispered in the dark! Need I tell you my feelings; how I felt at coming to the town made famous by great men, Mayhew, Chauncy, Buckminster, Kirkland, Holley, Pierpont, Channing, Ware — names dear and honoured in my boyish heart! Need I tell you how I felt at sight of the work which stretched out before me? Do you wonder that I asked, Who is sufficient for these things? and said, Alas, not I, Thou knowest, Lord! But some of you told me you asked not the wisdom of a wiser man, the ability of one stronger, but only that I should do what I could. I came, not doubting that I had some truths to say; not distrusting God, nor man, nor you; distrustful only of myself. I feared I had not the power, amid the dust and noises of the day, to help you see and hear the great realities of religion as they appeared to me; to help you feel the life of real religion, as in my better moments I have felt its truth! But let that pass. As I came here from Sunday to Sunday, when I began to feel your spirits prayed with mine a prayer for truth and life; as I looked down into your faces, thoughtful and almost

breathless, I forgot my self-distrust; I saw the time was come; that, feebly as I know I speak, my best thoughts were ever the most welcome! I saw the harvest was plenteous indeed: but the preacher, I feel it still, was all unworthy of his work!

Brothers and Sisters, let us be true to our sentiments and ideas. Let us not imitate another's form unless it symbolize a truth to us. We must not affect to be singular, but not fear to be alone. Let us not foolishly separate from our brothers elsewhere. Truth is yet before us, not only springing up out of the manly words of this Bible, but out of the ground; out of the heavens; out of man and God. Whole firmaments of truth hang over o'er our heads, waiting the telescopic eye of the true-hearted see-er. Let us follow truth, in form, thought, or sentiment, wherever she may call. God's daughter cannot lead us from the path. The further on we go, the more we find. Had Columbus turned back only the day before he saw the land, the adventure had been worse than lost.

We must practise a manly self-denial. Religion always demands that, but never more than when our brothers separate from us, and we stand alone. By our mutual love and mutual forbearance, we shall stand strong. With zeal for our common work, let us have charity for such as dislike us, such as oppose and would oppress us. Let us love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for such as despitefully use us. Let us overcome their evil speech with our own goodness. If others have treated us ill, called us unholy names, and mocked at us, let us forgive it all, here and now, and help them also to forget and outgrow that temper which bade them treat us so. A kind answer is fittest rebuke to an unkind word.

If we have any truth it will not be kept hid. It will run over the brim of our urn and water our brother's field. Were any truth to come down to us in advance from God, it were not that we might forestall the light, but shed it forth for all His children to walk by and rejoice in. "One candle will light a thousand" if it be itself lighted. Let our light shine before men so that they may see our good deeds, and themselves praise God by a manly life. This

we owe to them as to ourselves. A noble thought and a mean man make a sorry union. Let our idea show itself in our life—that is preaching, right eloquent. Do this, we begin to do good to men, and though they should oppose us, and our work should fail, we shall have yet the approval of our own heart, the approval of God, be whole within ourselves, and one with Him.

Some of you are venerable men. I have wondered that a youthful ardour should have brought you here. Your silvery heads have seemed a benediction to my work. But most of you are young. I know it is no aping of a fashion that has brought you here. I have no eloquence to charm or please you with; I only speak right on. I have no reputation but a bad name in the churches. I know you came not idly, but seeking after truth. Give a great idea to an old man, and he carries it to his grave; give it to a young man, and he carries it to his life. It will bear both young and old through the grave and into eternal heaven beyond.

Young men and women, the duties of the world fall eminently on you. God confides to your hands the ark which holds the treasures of the age. On young shoulders He lays the burden of life. Yours is the period of passion; the period of enterprise and of work. It is by successive generations that mankind goes forward. The old, stepping into honourable graves, leave their places and the results they won to you. But departing they seem to say, as they linger and look back, Do ye greater than we have done! The young just coming into your homes seem to say, Instruct us to be nobler than yourselves! Your life is the answer to your children and your sires. The next generation will be as you make it. It is not the schools but the people's character that educates the child. Amid the trials, duties, dangers of your life, religion alone can guide you. It is not the world's eye that is on you, but God's; it is not the world's religion that will suffice you, but the religion of a Man, which unites you with truth, justice, piety, goodness; yes, which makes you one with God!

Young men and women—you can make this church a fountain of life to thousands of fainting souls. Yes, you

can make this city nobler than city ever was before. A manly life is the best gift you can leave mankind; that can be copied for ever. Architects of your own weal or woe, your destiny is mainly in your own hands. It is no great thing to reject the popular falsehoods; little and perhaps not hard. But to receive the great sentiments and lofty truths of real religion, the Christianity of Christ; to love them, to live them in your business and your home, that is the greatest work of man. Thereby you partake of the spirit and nature of God; you achieve the true destiny for yourself; you help your brothers do the same.

When my own life is measured by the ideal of that young Nazarene, I know how little I deserve the name of Christian; none knows that fact so well as I. But you have been denied the name of Christian because you came here, asking me to come. Let men see that you have the reality, though they withhold the name. Your words are the least part of what you say to men. The foolish only will judge you by your talk; wise men by the general tenour of your life. Let your religion appear in your work and your play. Pray in your strongest hours. Practise your prayers. By fair-dealing, justice, kindness, self-control, and the great work of helping others while you help yourself, let your life prove a worship. These are the real sacraments and Christian communion with God, to which water and wines are only helps. Criticize the world not by censure only, but by the example of a great life. Shame men out of their littleness, not by making mouths, but by walking great and beautiful amongst them. You love God best when you love men most. Let your prayers be an uplifting of the soul in thought, resolution, love, and the light thereof shall shine through the darkest hour of trouble. Have not the Christianity of the street; but carry Christ's Christianity there. Be noble men, then your works must needs be great and manly.

This is the first Sunday of a new year. What an hour for resolutions; what a moment for prayer! If you have sins in your bosom, cast them behind you now. In the last year, God has blessed us; blessed us all. On some his angels waited, robed in white, and brought new joys;

here a wife, to bind men closer yet to Providence; and there a child, a new Messiah, sent to tell of innocence and heaven. To some his angels came clad in dark livery, veiling a joyful countenance with unpropitious wings, and bore away child, father, sister, wife, or friend. Still were they angels of good Providence, all God's own; and he who looks aright finds that they also brought a blessing, but concealed, and left it, though they spoke no word of joy. One day our weeping brother shall find that gift and wear it as a diamond on his breast.

The hours are passing over us, and with them the day. What shall the future Sundays be, and what the year? What we make them both. God gives us time. We weave it into life, such figures as we may, and wear it as we will. Age slowly rots away the gold we are set in, but the adamantine soul lives on, radiant every way in the light streaming down from God. The genius of eternity, star-crowned, beautiful, and with prophetic eyes, leads us again to the gates of time, and gives us one more year, bidding us fill that golden cup with water as we can or will. There stand the dirty, fetid pools of worldliness and sin; curdled and mantled, film-covered, streaked, and striped with many a hue, they shine there, in the slanting light of new-born day. Around them stand the sons of earth and cry, Come hither; drink thou and be saved! Here fill thy golden cup! There you may seek to fill your urn; to stay your thirst. The deceitful element, roping in your hands, shall mock your lip. It is water only to the eye. Nay, show-water only unto men half-blind. But there, hard by, runs down the stream of life, its waters never frozen, never dry; fed by perennial dews falling unseen from God. Fill there thine urn, oh, brother-man, and thou shalt thirst no more for selfishness and crime, and faint no more amid the toil and heat of day; wash there, and the leprosy of sin, its scales of blindness, shall fall off, and thou be clean for ever. Kneel there and pray; God shall inspire thy heart with truth and love, and fill thy cup with never-ending joy!

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE MOST CHRISTIAN USE OF THE SUNDAY.

A SERMON PREACHED AT THE MELODEON, ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 1848.

The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.—Mark ii. 27.

From past ages we have received many valuable institutions, that have grown out of the transient wants or the permanent nature of man. Amongst these are two which have done a great service in promoting the civilization of mankind, which still continue amongst us. I speak now of the institution of Sunday, and that of preaching. By the one, a seventh part of the time is separated from the common pursuits of life, in order that it may be devoted to bodily relaxation, and to the culture of the spiritual powers of man; by the other, a large body of men, in most countries the best educated class, are devoted to the cultivation of these spiritual powers. Such at least is the theory of those two institutions, be their effect in practice what it may. This morning, let us look at one of them, and so I invite your attention to some thoughts relative to the Sunday—to the most Christian and profitable use of that day.

There is a stricter party of Christians amongst us, who speak out their opinions concerning the Sunday; this comprises what are commonly called the more "evangelical" sects. There is a party less strict in many particulars, comprising what are commonly called the more "liberal" sects. They have hitherto been comparatively silent on this theme. Their opinions about the Sunday have not

usually been so plainly spoken out, but have been made apparent by their actions, by occasional and passing words, rather than by full, distinct, and emphatic declarations. The stricter party, of late years, have been growing a little more strict; the party less strict likewise advance in the opposite direction. Recently, a call has been published by a few men, for a convention to consult and take some steps towards the less rigid course, for the purpose, as I understand it, of making the Sunday even more valuable than it is now. I take it for granted that both parties desire to make the best possible use of the Sunday —the use most conducive to the highest interests of mankind; that they desire this equally. There are good men on both sides, the more and the less strict; pious men, in the best sense of that word, may be found on both sides. There is no need of imputing bad motives to either party in order to explain the difference between the two.

Such is the aspect of the two parties in the field, looking opposite ways, but at one another. It seems likely that there will be a quarrel, and, as is usual in such cases, hard words on each side, hard thoughts and unkind feelings on both sides. Before the quarrel begins, and our eyes are blinded by the dust of controversy; before our blood is fired, and we become wholly incapable of judgment—let us look coolly at the matter, and ask, Do we need any change in respect to the observance of the Sunday? Are the present opinions respecting the origin, nature, and original design of that institution just and true? Is the present mode of observing it the most profitable that can be devised? The inquiry is one of great importance.

To answer these questions, it is necessary to go back a little into the history of the Hebrew Sabbath and the Christian Sunday. However, it is not needful to go much into detail, or consume this precious hour in a learned discussion on antiquarian matters which concern none but scholars.

With the Hebrews the actual observance of Saturday—the Sabbath—as a day rest, seems to be of pretty late origin. The first mention of it in authentic Hebrew history, as actually observed, occurs about two hundred years after Samuel, and about six hundred after Moses—

a little less than nine hundred before Christ. The passage is found in 2 Kings iv. 23; a child had died, as the narrative relates—the mother wished to send for Elisha, "the man of God." Her husband objects, saying, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor Sabbath." This connection with the new moon is significant. In the earlier historical books of Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, and the first of Kings, there is no mention of the Sabbath, not the least allusion to it.

This seems to have been the origin of its observance:—The worship of one God, with the distinctive name Jehovah, gradually got established in the Hebrew nation; for this they seem largely indebted to Moses. Gradually this worship of Jehovah became connected with a body of priests, who were regularly organized at length, and claimed descent from Levi—some of them from Aaron, his celebrated descendant, the elder brother of Moses. The rise of the Levitical priesthood is remarkable, and easily traced in the Old Testament. Some books are entirely destitute of a Levitical spirit, such as Genesis and Judges; others are filled with it, as Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and the books of Chronicles. With the priesthood it seems there came the observance of certain days for religious or festal purposes—New Moon days, Full Moon days, and the like. These seem to have been derived from the nations about them, with whom the moon—deified as Astarte, the Queen and Mother of Heaven, and under other names—was long an object of worship. The observance of those days points back to the period when Fetichism, the worship of Nature, was the prominent form of religion. With the other days of religious observance came the seventh day, called the Sabbath. No one knows its true historical origin. The statement respecting its origin in the fourth commandment, and elsewhere in the Old Testament, can hardly be accepted as literally true by any one in this century. No scientific man, in the present stage of philosophic inquiry, will believe that God created the universe in six days, and then rested on the seventh. Did other nations observe this day before the Hebrews; was it also connected with some Fetichistic form of worship; what was the historical event which led to the selection of that day

in special? This it is easy to ask, but perhaps not possible to answer. These are curious questions; they are of little practical importance to us at this moment.

After the Hebrew institutions of religion got fixed—the worship of Jehovah, the Levitical priesthood, and the peculiar forms of sacrifice—it became common to refer their origin back to the time of Moses, who lived fourteen or fifteen hundred years before Christ. Since few memorials from his age have come down to us, it is plain we can know little of him. But from the impression which his character left on his nation, and through them on the whole world; from the myths so early connected with his name; it seems pretty clear that he was one of the greatest and most extraordinary men that ever lived. Mankind seldom tell great things of little men. It is difficult to say what share he had in making the laws of the Hebrew nation which are commonly referred to him,—and, as it is popularly taught, revealed to him directly by Jehovah. Perhaps we are not safe in referring to him even the whole of the ten commandments; surely not in any one of their present forms.[1] Was the Sabbath observed as a day of rest before Moses? Was its observance enforced by him? Was it even known to him? These questions are not easily answered. This is only certain: from the time of Moses to that of Jehoram a period of about six hundred years, there is no historical mention of its observance, not the least allusion to it. Yet we have documents which treat of that period,—the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and the Kings,—some of them historical documents, which go into the minute detail of the national peculiarities, and were evidently written with a good deal of concern for strict integrity and truth; they refer to the national rite of circumcision. Now, if the Sabbath had been observed during that period, it is difficult to believe it would have received no passing notice in those historical books. But not only is there no mention of it therein, none even in the times of David and Solomon, who favoured the priesthood so strongly; but in the book of Chronicles, the most Levitical book in the Bible, at a date more than two hun-

[1] These celebrated commandments have come down to us in three distinct forms; namely, in Exodus xx., in Exodus xxxiv., and in Deut. v. The differences between these several codes are quite remarkable and significant.

dred years later than the time of Jehoram, it is distinctly declared that the Sabbath had not been kept for nearly five hundred years.[1] But even if this statement is true, which is scarcely probable, it is plain from the frequent mention of the Sabbath in the writings of the latter part of that period—Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others—that the institution was one well known and highly regarded by religious men. After the return from the Babylonian exile, it seems to have been kept with considerable rigour; this we learn from the book of Nehemiah.

The Hebrew law, as it is contained in the Pentateuch, is a singular mixture of conflicting statutes, evidently belonging to different ages, many of them wholly unsuitable to the condition of the people when the laws are alleged to have been given. However, they are all referred back to the time of Moses in the Pentateuch itself, and by the popular theology at the present day. In the law the command is given to keep the seventh day as a day of rest, and that command is referred distinctly to Jehovah himself. The reason is given for choosing that day:—"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed;" the Sabbath, therefore, was to be kept in commemoration of the fact, that after Jehovah had spent the week in creating the world, "he rested and was refreshed." It was to be a day of rest for master and slave, for man and beast. A special sacrifice was offered on that day, in addition to the usual ceremonies, but no provision was made for the religious instruction of the people. The Sabbath was what its Hebrew name implies, a rest from all labour. The law, in general terms, forbade all work; but, not content with that, it descends to minute details, specifically prohibiting by statute the gathering or preparation of food on the Sabbath, even of food to be consumed on that day itself; the lighting of a fire, or the removal from one's place; and, by a decision where the statute did not apply, forbade the gathering of sticks of wood. The punishment for violating the Sabbath in general, or in any one of these particulars, was death: "Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death." However, amusement was not prohibited, nor eating and drinking, only work. The command, "Let no

[1] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.

man go out of his place on the seventh day," at a later period, was liberally interpreted, and a man was allowed to go two thousand cubits, a Sabbath-day's journey.

Long after the time of Moses, some of the Hebrews returned from exile amongst a more civilized and refined people. It seems probable that only the stricter portion returned and established themselves in the land of their fathers. Nehemiah, their leader, enforced the observance of the Sabbath with a strictness and rigour of which earlier times afford no evidence. But the nation was not content with making it a day of idleness. They established synagogues where the people freely assembled on the Sabbath and other public days, for religious instruction, and thus founded an excellent institution which has shown itself fruitful of good results. So far as I know, that is the earliest instance on record of provision being made for the regular religious instruction of the whole people. Experience has shown its value, and now all the most highly civilized nations of the earth have established similar institutions. However, in the synagogues the business of religious instruction was not at all in the hands of the priests, but in those of the people, acting in their primary character without regard to Levitical establishments. A priest, as such, is never an instructor of the people; he is to go through his ritual, not beyond it.

It is easy to learn from the New Testament what were the current opinions about the Sabbath in the time of Christ. It was unlawful to gather a head of wheat on the Sabbath, as a man walked through the fields; it was unlawful to cure a sick man, though that cure could be effected by a touch or a word; unlawful for a man to walk home and carry the light cushion on which he had lain. What was unlawful was reckoned wicked also; for what is a crime in the eyes of the priest, he commonly pretends is likewise a sin before the eyes of God. Yet it was not unlawful to eat, drink, and be merry on the Sabbath; nor to lift a sheep out of the ditch; nor to quarrel with a man who came to deliver mankind from their worst enemies. It was lawful to perform the rite of circumcision on the Sabbath, but unlawful to cure a man of any sickness. Jesus once placed these two, the allowing of that ritual mutilation and the prohibition of the humane act of

curing the sick on the Sabbath, in ridiculous contrast. In the fourth Gospel he goes further, and actually denies the alleged ground for the original institution of the Sabbath; he denies that God had ever ceased from his work, or rested: "My Father worketh hitherto."[1] However, in effecting these cures he committed a capital offence; the Pharisees so regarded it, and took measures to insure his punishment. It does not appear that they were illegal measures. It is probable they took regular and legal means to bring him to condign punishment as a Sabbath-breaker. He escaped by flight.

Such was the Sabbath with the Hebrews, such the recorded opinion of Jesus concerning it. There were also other days in which labour was forbidden, but with them we have nothing to do at present. Jesus taught piety and goodness without the Hebrew limitations; of course, then, the new wine of Christianity could not be put into the old bottles of the Jews. Their fast days and Sabbath days, their rites and forms, were not for him.

Now, not long after the death of Christ his followers became gradually divided into two parties. First, there were the Jewish Christians; that was the oldest portion, the old school of Christians. They are mentioned in ecclesiastical history as the Ebionites, Nazarines, and under yet other names. Peter and James were the great men in that division of the early Christians. Matthew, and the author of the Gospel according to the Hebrews, were their evangelists. The church at Jerusalem was their stronghold. They kept the whole Hebrew law; all its burdensome ritual, its circumcision and its sacrifices, its new-moon days and its full-moon days, Sabbath, fasts, and feasts; the first fifteen bishops of the church at Jerusalem were circumcised Jews. It seems to me they misunderstood Jesus fatally; counting him nothing but the Messiah of the Old Testament, and Christianity, therefore, nothing but Judaism brightened up and restored to its original purity.

I have often mentioned how strongly Matthew, taking him for the author of the first Gospel, favours this way of thinking. He represents Jesus as commanding his dis-

[1] John v. 1—18, and vii. 19—24.

ciples to observe all the Mosaic law, as the Pharisees interpreted that law,[1] though such a command is utterly inconsistent with the general spirit of Christ's teachings, and even with his plain declaration, as preserved in other parts of the same Gospel. It is worthy of note that this command is peculiar to Matthew. But there is another instance of the same Jewish tendency, though not so obvious at first sight. Matthew represents Jesus as saying, "The Son of man," that is, the Messiah, "is Lord even of the Sabbath day." Accordingly, he is competent to expound the law correctly, and determine what is lawful to do on that day. In Matthew, therefore, Jesus, in his character of Messiah, is represented as giving a judicial opinion, and ruling that it "is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Now, Mark and Luke represent it a little different. In Mark, Jesus himself declares that "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Matthew entirely omits that remarkable saying. According to Mark, Jesus declares in general terms, that man is of more consequence than the observance of the Sabbath, while Matthew only considers that the Messiah is "Lord of the Sabbath day." The cause of this diversity is quite plain. Matthew was a Jewish Christian, and thought Christianity was nothing but restored Judaism.

The other party may be called liberal Christians, though they must not be confounded with the party which now bears that name. They were the new school of early Christians. They rejected the Hebrew law, so far as it did not rest on human nature, and considered that Christianity was a new thing; Christ not a mere Jew, but a universal man, who had thrown down the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles. All the old artificial distinctions, therefore, were done away with at once. Paul was the head of the liberal party among the primitive Christian. He was considered a heretic; and though he was more efficient than any of the other early preachers of Christianity, yet the author of the Apocalypse thought him not worthy of a place in the foundation of the new Jerusalem, which rests on the twelve apostles.[2] The fourth Gospel, with peculiarities of its own, is written wholly in

[1] Matt. xxiii. 1–3. [2] Rev. xxi. 14.

the interest of this party; James is not mentioned in it at all, and Peter plays but quite a subordinate part, and is thrown into the shade by John. The disciples are spoken of as often misunderstanding their great Teacher. These peculiarities cannot be considered as accidental; they are monuments of the controversy then going on between the two parties. Paul stood in direct opposition to the Jewish Christians. This is plain from the Epistle to the Galatians, in which the heads of the rival sects appear very unlike the description given of them in the book of Acts. The observance of Jewish sacred days was one of the subjects of controversy. Let us look only at the matter of the Sabbath, as it came in question between the two parties. Paul exalts Christ far above the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament, calling him an image of the invisible God, and declaring that all the fulness of divinity dwells in him, and adds, that he had annulled the old Hebrew law. "Therefore," says Paul, "let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath."[1] Here he distinctly states the issue between the two Christian sects. Elsewhere he speaks of the Jewish party, as men that "would pervert the gospel of Christ," by teaching that a man was "justified by the works of the law;" that is, by a minute observance of the Hebrew ritual.[2] Paul rejects the authority of the Old Testament. The law of Moses was but a schoolmaster's servant, to bring us to Christ; man had come to Christ, and needed that servant no longer; the law was a taskmaster and guardian set over man in his minority, now he had come of age, and was free; the law was a shadow of good things, and they had come; it was a law of sin and death, which no man could bear, and now the law of the spirit of life, as revealed by Jesus Christ, had made men free from the law of sin and death. Such was the work of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Thus sweeping off the authority of the old law in general, he proceeds to particulars: he rejects circumcision, and the offering of sacrifices; rejects the distinction of nations as Jew and Gentile; the distinction of meats as clean and unclean, and all distinction of days as holy and not holy. If one man thought one day holier than another day, if an-

[1] Col. ii. 16. [2] Gal. i. 5.

other man thought all days equally holy, he would have each man true to his conviction, but not seek to impose that conviction on his brothers. Such was Paul's opinion of "The law of Moses;" such of the Sabbath; the Christians were not "subject to ordinances."

Let us come now to the common practice of the early Christians. The apostles went about and preached Christianity, as they severally understood it. They spoke as they found opportunity; on the Sabbath to the Jews in the synagogues, and on the other days as they found time and hearers. It does not appear from the New Testament that they limited themselves to any particular day; they were missionaries, some of them remained but a little while in a place, making the most of their time. It seems that the early Christians, who lived in large towns, met every day for religious purposes. But as that would be found inconvenient, one day came to be regarded as the regular time of their meetings. The Jewish Christians observed the Sabbath with pharisaic rigour, while the liberal Christians neglected it. But both parties of Christians observed, at length, the first day of the week as a peculiar day. No one knows when this observance of the Sunday began; it is difficult to find proof in the New Testament, that the apostles regarded it as a peculiar day; it seems plain that Paul did not. But it is certain that in the second century after Jesus, the Christians in general did so regard it, and perhaps all of them.

Why was the Sunday chosen as the regular day for religious meeting? It was regarded as the day on which Jesus rose from the dead; and, following the mythical account in Genesis, it was the day on which God began the creation, and actually created the light. Here there were two reasons for the selection of that day; both are frequently mentioned by the early Christian writers. Sunday, therefore, was to them a symbol of the new creation, and of the light that had come into the world. The liberal Christians, in separating from the Jewish Sabbath, would naturally exalt the new religious day. Athanasius, I think, is the first who ascribes a divine origin to the institution of Sunday. He says, "The Lord changed this day from the Sabbath to the Sunday;" but Athanasius lived three

centuries after Christ, and seems to have known little about the matter.

The officers and the order of services in the churches on the Sunday seem derived from the usages of the Jewish synagogues. The Sunday was thus observed: the people came together in the morning; the exercises consisted of readings from the Old Testament and such writings of the Christians as the assembly saw fit to have read to them. In respect to these writings there was a wide difference in the different churches, some accepting more and others less. The overseer, or bishop, made an address, perhaps an exposition of the passage of Scripture. Prayers were said and hymns chanted; the Lord's supper was celebrated. The form no doubt differed, and widely, too, in different places. It was not the form of servitude, but the spirit of freedom, they observed. But all these things were done, likewise, on other days; the Lord's supper could be celebrated on any day, and is on every day by the Catholic church, even now; for the Catholics have been true to the early practices in more points than the Protestants are willing to admit. In some places it is certain there was a "communion" every day. Sunday was regarded holy by the early Christians, just as certain festivals are regarded holy by the Catholics, the Episcopalians, and the Lutherans, at this day; as the New Englanders regard Thanksgiving day as holy. Other days, likewise, were regarded as holy; were used in the same manner as the Sunday. Such days were observed in honour of particular events in the life of Jesus, or in honour of saints and martyrs, or they were days consecrated by older festivals belonging to the more ancient forms of religion. In the Catholic church such days are still numerous. It is only the Puritans who have completely rejected them, and they have been obliged to substitute new ones in their place. However, there was one peculiarity of the Sunday which distinguished it from most or all other days. It was a day of religious rejoicing. On other days the Christians knelt in prayer; on the Sunday they stood up on joyful feet, for light had come into the world. Sunday was a day of gladness and rejoicing. The early Christians had many fasts! they were commonly held on Wednesdays and Fridays, often on Saturday also, the

more completely to get rid of the Jewish superstition which consecrated that day; but on Sunday there must be no fast. He would be a heretic who should fast on Sunday. It is strictly forbidden in the "canons of the apostles;" a clergyman must be degraded and a layman excommunicated for the offence. Says St Ignatius, in the second century, if the epistle be genuine, "Every lover of Christ feasts on the Lord's day." "We deem it wicked," says Tertullian in the third century, "to fast on the Sunday, or to pray on our knees." "Oh," says St Jerome, "that we could fast on the Sunday, as Paul did and they that were with him." St Ambrose says, the "Manichees were damned for fasting on the Lord's day." At this day the Catholic church allows no fasting on Sunday, save the Sunday before the crucifixion; even Lent ceases on that day.

It does not appear that labour ceased on Sunday, in the earliest age of Christianity. But when Sunday became the regular and most important day for holding religious meetings, less labour must of course be performed on that day. At length it became common in some places to abstain from ordinary work on the Sunday. It is not easy to say how early this was brought about. But after Christianity had become "respectable," and found its way to the ranks of the wealthy, cultivated, and powerful, laws got enacted in its favour. Now the Romans, like all other ancient nations, had certain festal days in which it was not thought proper to labour unless work was pressing. It was disreputable to continue common labour on such days without an urgent reason; they were pretty numerous in the Roman calendar. Courts did not sit on those days; no public business was transacted. They were observed as Christmas and the more important saints' days in Catholic countries; as Thanksgiving day and the Fourth of July with us. In the year three hundred and twenty-one, Constantine, the first Christian emperor of Rome, placed Sunday among their ferial days. This was perhaps the first legislative action concerning the day. The statute forbids labour in towns, but expressly excludes all prohibition of field-labour in the country. About three hundred and sixty-six or seven the Council of Laodicea decreed that Christians

1. Justinian, *Cod.* Lib. iii. Tit. xii. l. 3.

"ought not to Judaize and be idle on the Sabbath, but to work on that day; especially observing the Lord's day, and if it is possible, as Christians, resting from labour." Afterwards the Emperor Theodosius forbade certain public games on Sunday, Christmas, Epiphany, and the whole time from Easter to Pentecost. Justinian likewise forbade theatrical exhibitions, races in the circus, and the fights of wild beasts, on Sunday, under severe penalties. This was done in order that the religious services of the Christians might not be disturbed. By his laws the Sunday continued to be a day in which public business was not to be transacted. But the Christmas days, the fifteen days of Easter, and numerous other days previously observed of Christians or pagans, were put in the same class by the law. All this it seems was done from no superstitious notions respecting those days, but for the sake of public utility and convenience. However, the rigour of the Jewish Sabbatical laws was by no means followed. Labours of love, *opera caritatis*, were considered as suitable business for those days. The very statute of Theodosius recommended the emancipation of slaves on Sunday. All impediments to their liberation were removed on that day, and though judicial proceedings in all other matters were forbidden on Sunday, an exception was expressly made in favour of emancipating slaves. This statute was preserved in the code of Justinian.[1] All these laws go to show that there were similar customs previously established among the Christians without the aid of legislation.

About the middle of the sixth century the Council of Orleans forbade labour in the fields, though it did not forbid travelling with cattle and oxen, the preparation of food, or any work necessary to the cleanliness of the house or the person—declaring that rigours of that sort belong more to a Jewish than to a Christian observance of the day. That, I think, is the earliest ecclesiastical decree which has come down to us forbidding field labour in the country; a decree unknown till five hundred and thirty-eight years after Christ. But before that, in the year three hundred and thirteen, the Council of Elvira in Spain decreed, that if any one in a city absented himself three Sundays consecutively from the church, he should be suspended from

[1] *Cod.*, Lib. iii. Tit. xii. l. 2. See also, l. 3 and 11.

communion for a short time. Such a regulation, however, was founded purely on considerations of public utility. Many church establishments have thought it necessary to protect themselves from desertion by similar penal laws.

In Catholic countries, at the present day, the morning of Sunday is appropriated to public worship, the people flocking to church. But the afternoon and evening are devoted to society, to amusement of various kinds. Nothing appears sombre, but everything has a festive air; even the theatres are open. Sunday is like Christmas, or a Thanksgiving day in Boston, only the festive demonstrations are more public. It is so in the Protestant countries on the continent of Europe. Work is suspended, public and private, except what is necessary for the observance of the day; public lectures are suspended; public libraries closed; but galleries of paintings and statues are thrown open and crowded; the public walks are thronged. In Southern Germany, and, doubtless, elsewhere, young men and women have I seen in summer, of a Sunday afternoon, dancing on the green, the clergyman, Protestant or Catholic, looking on and enjoying the cheerfulness of the young people. Americans think their mode of keeping Sunday is unholy; they, that ours is Jewish and pharisaical. In Paris, sometimes, courses of scientific lectures are delivered after the hours of religious services, to men who are busy during the week with other cares, and who gladly take the hours of their only leisure day to gain a little intellectual instruction.

When England was a Catholic country, Catholic notions of Sunday of course prevailed. Labour was suspended; there was service in the churches, and afterwards there were sports for the people, but they were attended with quarrelling, noise, uproar, and continual drunkenness. It was so after the Reformation. In the time of Elizabeth the laws forbade labour except in time of harvest, when it was thought right to work, if need were, and "save the thing that God hath sent." Some of the Protestants wished to reform those disorders, and convert the Sunday to a higher use. The government, and sometimes the superior clergy, for a long time interfered to prevent the reform, often to protect the abuse. The "Book of Sports,'

appointed to be read in churches, is well known to us from the just indignation with which it filled our fathers.

Now, it is plain, that in England, before the Reformation, the Sunday was not appropriated to its highest use; not to the highest interests of mankind; no, not to the highest concerns, which the people, at that time, were capable of appreciating. The attempts, made then and subsequently, by government, to enforce the observance of the day, for purposes not the highest, led to a fearful reaction; that to other and counter reactions. The ill consequences of those movements have not yet ceased on either side of the ocean.

The Puritans represented the spirit of reaction against ecclesiastical and other abuses of their time, and the age before them. Let me do these men no injustice. I honour the heroic virtues of our fathers not less because I see their faults; see the cause of their faults, and the occasion which demanded such masculine and terrible virtues as the Puritans unquestionably possessed. I speak only of their doctrine of the Sunday. They were driven from one extreme to the other, for oppression makes wise men mad. They took mainly the notions of the Sabbath which belong to the latter portions of the Old Testament; they interpreted them with the most pharisaical rigour, and then applied them to the Sunday. Did they find no warrant for that rigour in the New Testament? they found enough in the Old; enough in their own character, and their consequent notions of God. They thus introduced a set of ideas respecting the Sunday, which the Christian church had never known before, and rigidly enforced an observance thereof utterly foreign both to the letter and spirit of the New Testament. They made Sunday a terrible day; a day of fear, and of fasting, and of trembling under the terrors of the Lord. They even called it by the Hebrew name—the Sabbath. The Catholics had said it was not safe to trust the Scriptures in the hands of the people, for an inspired Word needed an expositor also inspired. The abuse which the Puritans made of the Bible by their notions of the Sunday, seemed a fulfilment of the Catholic prophecy. But the Catholics did not see what is plain to all men now—that this very

abuse of Sunday and Scripture was only the reaction against other abuses, ancient, venerated, and enforced by the Catholic church itself.

Every sect has some institution which is the symbol of its religious consciousness, though not devised for that purpose. With the early Christians, it was their love-feasts and communion; with the Catholics, it is their gorgeous ritual with its ancient date and divine pretensions—a ritual so imposing to many; with the Quakers, who scorn all that is symbolic, the symbol equally appears in the plain dress and the plain speech, the broad brim, and *thee* and *thou*. With the Puritans, this symbol was the Sabbath, not the Sunday. Their Sabbath was like themselves, austere, inflexible as their "divine decrees;" not human and of man, but Hebrew and of the Jews, stern, cold, and sad.

The Puritans were possessed with the sentiment of fear before God; they had ideas analogous to that sentiment, and wrought out actions akin to those ideas. They brought to America their ideas and sentiments. Behold the effect of their actions. Let us walk reverently backward, with averted eyes, to cover up their folly, their shame, and their sin, as they could not walk to conceal the folly of their progenitors. The Puritans are the fathers of New England and her descendant States; the fathers of the American idea; of most things in America that are good; surely, of most that is best. They seem made on purpose for their work of conquering a wilderness and founding a State. It is not with gentle hands, not with the dalliance of effeminate fingers, that such a task is done. The work required energy the most masculine, in heart, head, and hands. None but the Puritans could have done such a work. They could fast as no men; none could work like them; none preach; none pray; none could fight as they fought. They have left a most precious inheritance to men who have the same greatness of soul, but have fallen on happier times. Yet this inheritance is fatal to mere imitators, who will go on planting of vineyards, where the first planter fell intoxicated with the fruit of his own toil. This inheritance is dangerous to men who will be no wiser than their ancestors. Let us honour the good deeds of our fathers; and not eat, but reverently bury their honoured bones.

The Puritans represented the natural reaction of mankind against old institutions that were absurd or tyrannical. The Catholic church had multiplied feast days to an extreme, and taken unnecessary pains to promote fun and frolic. The Puritans would have none of the saints' days in their calendar; thought sport was wicked; cut down Maypoles, and punished a man who kept Christmas after the old fashion. The Catholic church had neglected her golden opportunities for giving the people moral and religious instruction; had quite too much neglected public prayer and preaching, but relied mainly on sensuous instruments — architecture, painting, music. In revenge, the Puritan had a meeting-house as plain as boards could make it; tore the pictures to pieces; thought an organ "was not of God," and had sermons long and numerous, and prayers full of earnestness, zeal, piety, and faith, in short, possessed of all desirable things except an end. Did the Catholics forbid the people the Bible, emphatically the book of the people—the Puritan would read no other book; called his children Hebrew names, and reënacted "the laws of God" in the Old Testament, "until we can make better." Did Henry and Elizabeth underrate the people and overvalue the monarchy, nature had her vengeance for that abuse, and the Puritan taught the world that kings, also, had a joint in their necks.

The Puritans went to the extreme in many things: in their contempt for amusements, for what was graceful in man or beautiful in woman; in their scorn of art, of elegant literature, even of music; in their general condemnation of the past, from which they would preserve little excepting what was Hebrew, which, of course, they overhonoured as much as they undervalued all the rest. In their notions respecting the Sunday they went to the same extreme. The general reason is obvious. They wished to avoid old abuses, and thought they were not out of the water till they were in the fire. But there was a special reason, also: the English are the most empirical of all nations. They love a fact more than an idea, and often cling to an historical precedent rather than obey a great truth which transcends all precedents. The national tendency to external things, perhaps, helped lead them to these peculiar notions of the Sabbath. The precedent they

found in "The chosen people," and established, as they thought, by God himself.

The ideas of the Puritans respecting the Sunday are still cherished in the popular theology of New England. There is one party in our churches possessed of many excellences, which has always had the merit of speaking out fully what it thinks and feels. At this day that party still represents the Puritanic opinions about the Sunday, though a little modified. They teach that God created the world in six days, and rested the seventh; that he commanded mankind, also, to rest on that day; commanded a man to be stoned to death for picking up sticks of a Saturday: that by divine authority the first day of the week was substituted for the seventh, and therefore that it is the religious duty of all men to rest from work on that day, for the Hebrew law of the Sabbath is binding on Christians for ever. It is maintained that abstinence from work on Sunday is as much a religious duty as abstinence from theft or hatred; that the day must be exclusively devoted to religion, in the technical sense of that word, to public or private worship, to religious reading, thought, or conversation. To attend church on that day is thought to be a good in itself, though it should lead to no further good, and therefore a duty as imperative as the duty of loving man and God. The preacher may not edify, still the duty of attending to his ministration of the word remains the same; for the attendance is a good in itself. It is taught that work, that amusement, common conversation, the reading of a book not technically religious, is a sin, just as clearly a sin as theft or hatred, though perhaps not so great. Writing a letter, even, is denounced as a sin, though the letter be written for the purpose of arresting the progress of a war, and securing life and freedom to millions of men.

Now it is very plain that such ideas are not consistent with the truth. In the language of the church, they are a heresy. As we learn the facts of the case we must give up such ideas concerning the Sunday. It is like any other day. Christianity knows no classes of days, as holy or profane; all days are the Lord's days, all time holy time.

But then comes the other question, What is the best use to be made of the day; the use most conducive to the highest interests of mankind? Will it be most profitable to "give up the Sunday," to use it as the Catholics do, as the Puritans did, or to adopt some other method? To answer these questions fairly, let us look and see the effects of the present notions about the Sunday, and the stricter mode of observing it here in New England. The experience of two hundred years is worth looking at. Let us look at the good effects first.

The good and evil of any age are commonly bound so closely together, that in plucking up the tares, there is danger lest the wheat also be uprooted, at least trodden down. In America, especially in New England, everything is intense, with of course a tendency to extravagance, to fanaticism. Look at some of the most obvious signs of that intensity. No conservatism in the world is so bigoted as American conservatism; no democracy so intense. Nowhere else can you find such thorough-going defenders of the existing state of things, social, ecclesiastical, civil; such defenders of drunkenness, ignorance, superstition, slavery, and war: nowhere such radical enemies to the existing state of things; such foes of drunkenness, ignorance, superstition, slavery, and war. No "Revivals of religion" are like the American; none of old were like these. See how the American soldiers fight; how the American men will work. Puritanism was intense enough in England; in the New World it was yet more so. Our fathers were intense Calvinists; more Calvinistic than Calvin—they became Hopkinsian. They hated the Pope; kings and bishops were their aversion. They feared God. Did they love Him—love Him as much? They had an intense religious activity, but they had another intensity. It is better that we should say it, rather than men who do not honour them. That intensity of action, when turned towards material things, or, as they called them, "carnal things," needed some powerful check. It was found in their bigotry and superstition. In such an age as theirs, when the Reformation broke down all the ordinary restraints of society, and rent asunder the golden ties which bound man to the past; when the Anglican church ended in fire, and the English monarchy in blood; when men full

of piety thanked God for the fire and the bloodshed, and felt the wrongs of a thousand years driving them almost to madness—what was there to keep such men within bounds, and restrain them from the wildest license and unbridled anarchy? Nothing but superstition; nothing short of fear of hell. They broke down the monarchy; they trod the church under their feet. She who had once been counted as the queen and mother of society, was now to be regarded only as the Apocalyptical woman in scarlet, the mother of abominations, bride of the devil, and queen of hell. The Old Testament wrought on the minds of these men like a charm, to stimulate and to soothe. "One day," said they, "is made holy by God; in it shall no work be done by man or beast, or thing inanimate. On that day all must attend church as an act of religion." Here, then, was a bar extending across the stream of worldliness, filling one seventh part of its channel, wide and deep, and wonderfully interrupting its whelming tide. I admire the divine skill which compounds the gases in the air; which balances centripetal and centrifugal forces into harmonious proportions,—those fair ellipses in the unseen air; but still more marvellous is that same skill, diviner now, which compounds the folly and the wisdom of mankind; balances centripetal and centrifugal forces here, stilling the noise of kings and the tumult of the people, making their wrath to serve Him, and the remnant thereof restraining for ever.

On Sunday, master and man, the slave stolen from the wilderness, the servant—a Christian man bought from some Christian conqueror,—must cease from their work. Did the covetous, the cruel, the strong, oppress the weak for six days, the Sabbath said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." The servant was free from his master, and the weary was at rest. The plough stood still in the furrow; the sheaf lay neglected in the field; the horse and the ox enjoyed their master's Sabbath of rest, all heedless of the divine decrees, of election or reprobation, yet not the less watched over by that dear Providence which numbered the hairs of the head, and overruled the falling of a sparrow for the sparrow's good. All must attend church, master and man, rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed. Good things and great things got read

out of the Bible, it was the book of the people, the New Testament, written much of it in the interest of all mankind, with special emphasis laid on the rights of the weak and the duties of the strong. Good things got said in sermon and in prayer. The speakers must think, the hearers think, as well as tremble. Begin to think in a circle narrow as a lady's ring, or the Assembly's Catechism, you will think out; for thought, like all movement, tends to the right line. Calvinism has always bred thinkers, and when barbarism was the first danger was perhaps the only thing which could do it. Calvinism, too, has always shown itself in favour of popular liberty to a certain degree, and though it stops far short of the mark, yet goes far beyond the Catholic or Episcopalian.

Sunday, thus enforced by superstition, has yet been the education-day of New England; the national school-time for the culture of man's highest powers; therein have the clergy been our educators, and done a vast service which mankind will not soon forget. It was good seed they sowed on this soil of the New World; the harvest is proof of that. They builded wiser than they knew. Their unconscious hands constructed the thought of God. Even their superstition and bigotry did much to preserve church and clergy to us; much also to educate and develop the highest powers of man. But for that superstition we might have seen the same anarchy, the same unbridled license in the seventeenth century, which we saw in the eighteenth, as a consequence of a similar revolution, a similar reaction; only it would have been carried out with the intensity of that most masculine and earnest race of men. How much further English atrocities would have gone than the French did go; how long it would have taken mankind, by their proper motion, to reascend from a fall so adverse and so low, I cannot tell. I see what saved them from the plunge.

True, the Sunday was not what it should be, more than the week; preaching was not what it should be, more than practice. But without that Sunday, and without that preaching, New England would have been a quite different land; America another nation altogether; the world by no means so far advanced as now. New England with her descendants has always been the superior portion of

America. I flatter no man's prejudice, but speak a plain truth. She is superior in intelligence, in morality—that is too plain for proof. The prime cause of that superiority must be sought in the character of the fathers of New England; but a secondary and most powerful cause is to be found also in those two institutions—Sunday and preaching. Why is it that all great movements, from the American Revolution down to anti-slavery, have begun here? Why is it that education societies, missionary societies, Bible societies, and all the movements for the advance of mankind, begin here? Why, it is no more an accident than the rising of the tide. Find much of the cause in the superior character, and therefore in the superior aims, of the forefathers, much also will be found due to this—Once in the week they paused from all work; they thought of their God, who had delivered them from the iron house and yoke of bondage; they listened to the words of able men, exhorting them to justice, piety, and a heavenly walk with God; they trembled at fear of hell; they rejoiced at hope of heaven. The church—no, the "meeting-house"—was the common property of all; the minister the common friend. The slave looked up to him; the chief magistrate dared not look down on him. For more than a hundred years the ablest men of New England went into the pulpit. No talent was thought too great, no learning too rich and profound, no genius too holy and divine, for the work of teaching men their highest duty, and helping to their highest bliss. He was the minister to all. There was not then a church for the rich, and a chapel for the poor; the rich and the poor met together, for one God was the Maker of them all—their Father too; they had one gospel, one Redeemer,—their Brother not less than their God; they journeyed toward the same heaven, which had but one entrance for great and little; they prayed all the same prayer. The effect of this socialism of religion is seldom noticed; so we walk on moist earth, not thinking that we tread on the thunder-cloud and the lightning. But it is not in human nature for men of intense religious activity to meet in the same church, sing the same psalm, pray the same prayer, partake the same elements of communion, and not be touched with compassion—each for all, and all for each. The same causes

which built up religion in New England, built up democracy along with it. Is it not easy to see the cause which made the rich men of New England the most benevolent of rich men; gave them their character for generosity and public spirit—yes, for eminent humanity? The acorn is not more obviously the parent of the oak than those two institutions of New England the parent of such masculine virtues as distinguish her sons.

Regarded merely as a day of rest from labour, the Sunday has been of great value to us. Considering the intense character of the nation, our tendency to material things, and our restless love of work, it seems as if a Moses of the nineteenth century, legislating for us, would enact two rest-days in the week, rather than one. It is a good thing that a man once a week pauses from his work, arrays himself in clean garments, and is at rest.

Regarded in its other aspects, Sunday has aided the intellectual culture of the people to a degree not often appreciated. To many a man, yes, to most men, it is their only reading day, and they will read "secular" books, spite of the clerical admonition. Many a poor boy in New England, who has toiled all the week, and would gladly have studied all the night, did not obstinate Nature forbid, has studied stealthily all Sunday, not Jeremiah and the prophets, but Homer and the mathematics, and risen at length to eminence amongst cultivated men;—he has to thank the Sunday for the beginnings of that manly growth.

The moral and religious effect of the day is yet more important. One seventh part of the time was to be devoted to moral and religious culture. The clergy watched diligently over Sunday, as their own day. Work was then the accident; religion was the business. Everything with us becomes earnest; Sunday as earnest as the week. It must not be spent idly. Perhaps no body of clergymen, for two hundred years, on the whole, were ever so wakeful and active as the American. They also are earnest and full of intensity, especially in the more serious sects. I think I am not very superstitious; not often inclined to lean on my father's staff rather than walk on my own feet; not over-much accustomed to take things on trust because they have been trusted to all along: but I must confess

that I see a vast amount of good achieved by the aid of these two institutions, the Sunday and preaching, which could not have been done without them. I know I have my prejudices; I love the Sunday; a professional bias may warp me aside, for I am a preacher—the pulpit is my joy and my throne. Judge you how far my profession and my prejudice have led me astray in estimating the value of the Sunday, its preaching, and the good they have achieved for us in New England. I know what superstition, what bigotry, has been connected with both; I know it has kept grim and terrible guard about these institutions. I look upon that superstition and bigotry, as on the old New England guns which were fought with in the Indian wars, the French wars, and the Revolution;—things that did service when men knew not how to defend what they valued most with better tools and more Christian. I look on both with the same melancholy veneration, but honour them the more that now they are old, battered, unfit for use, and covered with rust. I would respectfully hang them up, superstition and the musket, side by side; honourable, but harmless, with their muzzles down, and pray God it might never be my lot to handle such ungodly weapons, though in a cause never so humane and holy.

Let us look a little at the ill effects of these notions of the Sunday and the observance which they led to. It is thought an act of religion to attend church and give a mere bodily presence there. Hence the minister often relies on this circumstance to bring his audience together; preaches sermons on the duty of going to church, while ingenuous boys blush for his weakness, and ask, "Were it not better to rely on your goodness, your piety, your wisdom; on your superior ability to teach men, even on your eloquence; rather than tell them it is an act of religion to come and hear you, when both they and you are painfully conscious that they are thereby made no wiser, no better, nor more Christian?" This notion is a dangerous one for a clergyman. It flatters his pride and encourages his sloth. It blinds him to his own defects, and leads him to attribute his empty benches to the perverseness of human nature and the carnal heart, which a few snow-flakes can frighten from his church, while a storm will not keep them from a

lecture on science or literature. No doubt it is a man's duty to seek all opportunities of becoming wiser and better. So far as church-going helps that work, so far it is a duty. But to count it in itself, irrespective of its consequences, an act of religion, is to commit a dangerous error, which has proved fatal to many a man's growth in goodness and piety. Let us look to the end, not merely at the means.

This notion has also a bad effect on the hearers. It is thought an act of religion to attend church, whether you are edified or not by sermon, by psalm, or prayer; an act of religion, though you could more profitably spend the time in your own closet at home, or with your own thoughts in the fields. Of course, then, he who attends once a day is thought a Christian to a certain degree; if twice, more so; if thrice, why that denotes an additional amount of growth in grace. In this way the day is often spent in a continual round of meetings. Sermon follows sermon; prayer treads upon the footsteps of prayer; psalm effaces psalm, till morning, afternoon, evening, all are gone. The Sunday is ended and over; the man is tired—but has he been profited and made better thereby? The sermons and the prayers have cancelled one another, been heard and forgot. They were too numerous to remember or produce their effect. So on a summer's lake, as the winds loiter and then pass by, ripple follows ripple, and wave succeeds to wave, yet the next day the wind has ceased and the unstable water bears no trace left there by all the blowings of the former day, but bares its incontinent bosom to the frailest and most fleeting clouds.

Another ill effect follows from regarding attendance at church as an act of religion in itself:—It is forgotten that a man cannot teach what he does not know. If you have more manhood than I, more religion; if you are the more humane and the more divine, it is idle for me to try and teach you divinity and humanity; idle in you to make believe you are taught. The less must learn of the greater, not the greater directly of the less. It is too often forgotten by the preacher that his hearers may be capable of teaching him; that he cannot fill them out of an emptiness, but a fulness. Hence it comes to pass that no one, how advanced soever, is allowed to graduate, so to say,

from the church. Perhaps it may do a great man, mature in Christianity, good to sit down with his fellows and hear a little man talk who knows nothing of religion; it may increase his sympathy with mankind. It can hardly be an act of religion to such a man so advanced in his goodness and piety; perhaps not the best use he could make of the hour.

The current opinion hinders social tendencies. A man must not meet with his friend and neighbour, or if he does, he must talk with bated breath, with ghostly countenance, and of a ghostly theme. From this abuse of the Sunday comes much of the cold and unsocial character which strangers charge us with. As things now go, there are many who have no opportunity for social intercourse except the hours of the Sunday. Then it is forbidden them. So they suffer and lose much of the charm of life; become ungenial, unsocial, stiff, and hard, and cold.

This notion hinders men, also, from intellectual culture. They must read no book but one professedly religious. Such works are commonly poor and dull; written mainly by men of little ability, of little breadth of view; not written in the interests of mankind, but only of a sect—the Calvinists or Unitarians. A good man groans when he looks over the immense piles of sectarian books written with good motives, and read with the most devout of intentions, but which produce their best effect when they lead only to sleep. Yet it is commonly taught that it is religion to spend a part of Sunday in reading such works, in listening, or in trying to listen, or in affecting to try and listen, to the most watery sermons, while it is wicked to read some "secular" book, philosophy, history, poem, or tale, which expands the mind and warms the heart. Our poor but wisdom-seeking boy must read his Homer only by stealth. There are many men who have no time for intellectual pursuits, none for reading, except on Sunday. It is cruel to tell them they shall read none but sectarian books or listen only to sectarian words.

But there are other evils yet. These notions and the corresponding practice tend to make religion external, consisting in obedience to form, in compliance with custom; while religion is and can be only piety and goodness, love to God and love to man. To keep the Sunday idle, to

attend church, is not being religious. It is easy to do that; easy to stop there, and then to look at real, manly saints, who live in the odour of sanctity, whose sentiment is a prayer, their deeds religion, and their whole life a perpetual communion with God, and say, "Infidel! Unbeliever."

Then, as one day is devoted to religion, it is thought that is enough; that religion has no more business in the world than the world in religion. So division is made of the territory of mortal life, in which partition worldliness has six days, while poor religion has only the Sunday, and content with her own limits, feels no salient wish to absorb or annex the week! It is painful to see this abuse of an institution so noble. No commonness of its occurrence renders it less painful. It is painful to be told that men of the most scrupulous sects on Sunday are in the week the last scrupulous of men.

But even in religious matters it is thought all things which pertain directly to the religious welfare of men are not proper to be discussed on Sunday. One must not preach against intemperance, against slavery, against war, on Sunday. It is not "evangelical;" not "preaching the gospel." Yet it is thought proper to preach on total depravity, on eternal damnation; to show that God will damn for ever the majority of mankind; that the apostle Peter was a Unitarian. The Sunday is not the time, the pulpit not the place, preaching not the instrument, wherewith to oppose the monstrous sins of our day and secure education, temperance, peace, freedom, for mankind. It is not evangelical, not Christian, to do that of a Sunday! Yet, wonderful to say, it is not thought very wicked to hold a political caucus on Sunday for the merest party purposes; not wicked at all to work all day at the navy-yards in fitting out vessels if they are only vessels of war; not at all wicked to toil all Sunday, if it is only in aiming to kill men in regular battle. Theological newspapers can expend their cheap censure on a member of Congress for writing a letter on Sunday, yet have no word of fault to find with the order which sets hundreds to work on Sunday in preparing armaments of war; not a word against the war which sets men to butcher their Christian brothers on the day which Christians celebrate as the an-

niversary of Christ's triumph over death! These things show that we have not yet arrived at the most profitable and Christian mode of using the Sunday; and when I consider these abuses I wonder not that the cry of "Infidel" is met by the unchristian taunt, yet more deserving and biting, "Thou hypocrite!" I wonder not that some men say, "Let us away with the Sunday altogether; and if we have no place for rest, we will have none for hypocrisy."

The efforts honestly made by good and honest men, to Judaize the day still more; to revive the sterner features of ancient worship; to put a yoke on us which neither we nor our fathers could bear; to transform the Christian Sunday into the Jewish Sabbath, must lead to a reaction. Abuse on one side will be met by abuse on the other; despotic asceticism by license; Judaism by heathenism. Superstition is the mother of denial. Men will scorn the Sunday; abuse is timely rest. Its hours that may be devoted to man's highest interests will be prostituted to low aims, and worldliness make an unbroken sweep from one end of the month to the other; and then it will take years of toil before mankind can get back and secure the blessings now placed within an easy reach. I put it to you, men whose heads time has crowned with white, or sprinkled with a sober gray, if you would deem it salutary to enforce on your grandchildren the Sabbath austerities which your parents imposed on you? In your youth was the Sunday a welcome day; a genial day; or only wearisome and sour? Was religion, dressed in her Sabbath dress, a welcome guest; was she lovely and to be desired? Your faces answer. Let us profit by your experience.

How can we make the Sunday yet more valuable? If we abandon the superstitious notions respecting its origin and original design, the evils that have hitherto hindered its use will soon perish of themselves. They all grow out of that root. If men are not driven into a reaction by pretensions for the Sunday which facts will not warrant; if unreasonable austerities are not forced upon them in the name of the law, and the name of God; there is no danger in our day that men will abandon an institution which already has done so much service to mankind. Let Sunday and preaching stand on their own merits, and they

will encounter no more opposition than the common school and the work-days of the week. Then men will be ready enough to appropriate the Sunday to the highest objects they know and can appreciate. Tell men the Sunday is made for man, and they will use it for its highest use. Tell them man is made for it, and they will war on it as a tyrant. I should be sorry to see the Sunday devoted to common work; sorry to hear the clatter of a mill, or the rattle of the wheels of business, on that day. I look with pain on men engaged needlessly in work on that day; not with the pain of wounded superstition, but a deeper regret. I would not water my garden with perfumes when common water was at hand. We shall always have work enough in America; hand-work, and head-work, for common purposes. There is danger that we shall not have enough of rest, of intellectual cultivation, of refinement, of social intercourse; that our time shall be too much devoted to the lower interests of life, to the means of living and not the end.

I would not consider it an act of religion to attend church: only a good thing to go there when the way of improvement leads through it; when you are made wiser and better by being there. I am pained to see a man spend the whole of a Sunday in going to church,—and forgetting himself in getting acquainted with the words of the preachers. I think most intelligent hearers, and most intelligent and Christian preachers, will confess that two sermons are better than three, and one is better than two. One need only look at the afternoon face of a congregation in the city, to be satisfied of this. If one half the day were devoted to public worship, the other half might be free for private studies of men at home, for private devotion, for social relaxation, for intercourse with one's own family and friends. Then Sunday afternoon and evening would afford an excellent opportunity for meeting for the promotion of the great humane movements of the day, which some would think not evangelical enough to be treated of in the morning. Would it be inconsistent with the great purposes of the day, inconsistent with Christianity, to have lectures on science, literature, and similar subjects delivered then? I do not believe the Catholic custom of spending the Sunday afternoon in

England, before the Reformation, was a good one. It diverted men from the higher end to the lower. I cannot think that here and now we need amusement so much as society, instruction, refinement, and devotion. Yet it seems to me unwise to restrain the innocent sports of children of a Sunday, to the same degree that our fathers did; to make Sunday to them a day of gloom and sadness. Thoughtful parents are now much troubled in this matter; they cannot enforce the old discipline, so disastrous to themselves; they fear to trust their own sense of what is right;—so, perhaps, get the ill of both schemes, and the good of neither. There are in Boston about thirty thousand Catholics, twenty-five thousand of them, probably, too ignorant to read with pleasure or profit any book. At home, amusement formed a part of their Sunday service; it was a part of their religion to make a festive use of Sunday afternoon. What shall they do? Is it Christian in us by statute to interdict them from their recreation? With the exception of children and these most ignorant persons, it does not appear that there is any class amongst us who need any part of the Sunday for sport.

I am not one of those who wish "to give up the Sunday;" indeed there are few such men amongst us; I would make it yet more useful and profitable. I would remove from it the superstition and the bigotry which have so long been connected with it; I would use it freely, as a Christian not enslaved by the letter of Judaism, but made free by an obedience to the law of the spirit of life. I would use the Sunday for religion in the wide sense of that word; use it to promote piety and goodness, for humanity, for science, for letters, for society. I would not abuse it by impudent license on the one hand, nor by slavish superstition on the other. We can easily escape the evils which come of the old abuse; can make the Sunday ten times more valuable than it is even now; can employ it for the highest interests of mankind, and fear no reaction into libertinism.

The Sunday is made for man, as are all other days; not man for the Sunday. Let us use it, then, not consuming its hours in a Jewish observance; not devote it to the lower necessities of life, but the higher; not squander it in idleness, sloth, frivolity, or sleep; let us use it for the

body's rest, for the mind's culture, for head, and heart, and soul.

Men and women, you have received the Sunday from your fathers, as a day to be devoted to the highest interests of man. It has done great service for them and for you. But it has come down accompanied with superstition which robs it of half its value. It is easy for you to make the day far more profitable to yourselves than it ever was to your fathers; easy to divest it of all bigotry, to free it from all oldness of the letter; easy to leave it for your children an institution which shall bless them for ages yet to come: or it is easy to bind on their necks unnatural restraints; to impose on their conscience and understanding absurdities which at last they must repel with scorn and contempt. It is in your hands to make the Sunday Jewish or Christian.

A SERMON OF OLD AGE.

PREACHED AT THE MUSIC HALL, ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 1854.

As the clear light is upon the holy candlestick; so is the beauty of the face in ripe age.—ECCLESIASTICUS xxvi. 17.

I HAVE often been asked to preach a Sermon of Old Age; and hitherto have declined, on the ground that I could not speak exactly from internal experience, but only from outward observation; and I hope to be able at some future time to speak on the theme: certainly, if I live, I may correct this present infirmity. To-day, I will try,—only asking all old persons to forgive the imperfections of this discourse; for they know what I only see. But as I was born into the arms of a father then one-and-fifty years old, who lived to add yet another quarter of a century thereunto; and as my cradle was rocked by a grandmother who had more than fourscore years at my birth, and nearly a hundred when she ceased to be mortal; and as my first "Christian ministry" was attending upon old age,—I think I know something about the character of men and women whom time makes venerable.

There is a period when the apple-tree blossoms with its fellows of the wood and field. How fair a time it is! All nature is woosome and winning; the material world celebrates its vegetable loves; and the flower-bells, touched by the winds of Spring, usher in the universal marriage of Nature. Beast, bird, insect, reptile, fish, plant, lichen, with their prophetic colours spread, all float forward on the tide of new life. Then comes the Summer. Many a blossom falls fruitless to the ground, littering the earth

with beauty, never to be used. Thick leaves hide the process of creation, which first blushed public in the flowers, and now unseen goes on. For so life's most deep and fruitful hours are hid in mystery. Apples are growing on every tree; all Summer long they grow, and in early Autumn. At length the fruit is fully formed; the leaves begin to fall, letting the sun approach more near. The apple hangs there yet; not to grow, only to ripen. Weeks long it clings to the tree; it gains nothing in size and weight. Externally, there is increase of beauty. Having finished the form from within, Nature brings out the added grace of colour. It is not a tricksy fashion painted on; but an expression which of itself comes out;—a fragrance and a loveliness of the apple's innermost. Within, at the same time, the component elements are changing. The apple grows mild and pleasant. It softens, sweetens; in one word, it mellows. Some night, the vital forces of the tree get drowsy, and the Autumn, with gentle breath, just shakes the bough; the expectant fruit lets go its hold, full-grown, full ripe, full coloured too, and with plump and happy sound the apple falls into the Autumn's lap; and the Spring's marriage promise is complete.

Such is the natural process which each fruit goes through, blooming, growing, ripening.

The same divine law is appropriate for every kind of animal, from the lowest reptile up to imperial man. It is very beautiful. The parts of the process are perfect; the whole is complete. Birth is human blossom; youth, manhood, they are our summer growth; old age is ripeness. The hands let go the mortal bough; that is natural death. It is a dear, good God who orders all for the apple-tree, and for mankind. Yea, his ark shelters the spider and the toad, the wolf, and the lizard, and the snake;—for He is Father and Mother to all the world.

I cannot tell where childhood ends, and manhood begins; nor where manhood ends, and old age begins. It is a wavering and uncertain line, not straight and definite, which borders betwixt the two. But the outward characteristics of old age are obvious enough. The weight diminishes. Man is commonly heaviest at forty, woman at fifty. After that, the body shrinks a little; the height

shortens as the cartilages become thin and dry. The hair whitens and falls away. The frame stoops, the bones become smaller, feebler, have less animal and more mere earthy matter. The senses decay, slowly and handsomely. The eye is not so sharp, and while it penetrates further into space, it has less power clearly to define the outline of what it sees. The ear is dull; the appetite less. Bodily heat is lower; the breath produces less carbonic acid than before. The old man consumes less food, water, air. The hands grasp less strongly; the feet less firmly tread. The lungs suck the breast of heaven with less powerful collapse. The eye and ear take not so strong a hold upon the world;

> "And the big manly voice,
> Turning again to childish treble, pipes
> And whistles in his sound."

The animal life is making ready to go out. The very old man loves the sunshine and the fire, the arm-chair and the shady nook. A rude wind would jostle the full-grown apple from its bough, full ripe, full coloured too. The internal characteristics correspond. General activity is less. Salient love of new things and of new persons, which bit the young man's heart, fades away. He thinks the old is better. He is not venturesome; he keeps at home. Passion once stung him into quickened life; now that gad-fly is no more buzzing in his ears. Madame de Staël finds compensation in Science for the decay of the passion that once fired her blood; but Heathen Socrates, seventy years old, thanks the gods that he is now free from that "ravenous beast," which had disturbed his philosophic meditations for many a year. Romance is the child of Passion and Imagination;—the sudden father that, the long-protracting mother this. Old age has little romance. Only some rare man, like Wilhelm Von Humboldt, keeps it still fresh in his bosom.

In intellectual matters the venerable man loves to recall the old times, to revive his favourite old men,—no new ones half so fair. So in Homer, Nestor, who is the oldest of the Greeks, is always talking of the old times, before the grandfathers of men then living had come into being; "not such as live in these degenerate days." Verse-loving

John Quincy Adams turns off from Byron and Shelley and Wieland and Goethe, and returns to Pope,

"Who pleased his childhood and informed his youth."

The pleasure of hope is smaller; that of memory greater. It is exceeding beautiful that it is so. The venerable man loves to set recollection to beat the roll-call, and summon up from the grave the old time, "the good old time,"—the old places, old friends, old games, old talk; nay, to his ear the old familiar tunes are sweeter than anything that Mendelssohn, or Strauss, or Rossini can bring to pass. Elder Brewster expects to hear St Martin's and Old Hundred chanted in heaven. Why not? To him heaven comes in the long-used musical tradition, not in the neologies of sweet sound.

He loves the old doctrines. The Christian of the fourth century, who in manhood went through fire for Christianity's sake, and confessed Jesus in the jail and on the rack, in his old age goes back to the castle of Dame Venus, whom in his heady youth he had forsworn. He loves the temples and statues of his father's religion, and rebuilds the faith which once he destroyed. The Protestant who stood by Luther's doctrine in all his manly days, now that he is old thinks of the Madonna of his childhood, and dies with the once hated wafer in his lips. The Unitarian woman at her Thursday lecture, who in her prime, with Ware and Channing, endured the reproach of thinking for herself, and bore the common Church's scoff and scorn, now fans her faded cheek with denunciations of all who doubt a miracle; deals "damnation round the land;" getting old and cold-blooded, she goes back o Orthodoxy, and wants a chance to warm her shrivelled limbs and poor thin blood at the fire of eternal torment. An old Poem of the North tells of a brave boy, who in his earlier days found his mother's cottage too narrow, mourned at tending the goats on the mountain-side, and felt his heart swell in him like a brook from the melting of the snow, when he saw a ship shoot like an arrow into the bay. He ran from his mother and the goats. The Viking took him on board. The wind swelled the sails. He saw the hill-top sink in the blue deep, and was riotously glad.

He took his father's sword in hand and swore to conquer him "houses and lands by the sea." He also is a Viking. He has been all over the Mediterranean coast, and conquered him "houses and lands by the sea;" now, in his old age, his palace in Byzantium is a weariness to him, and he longs for the little cottage of his mother. He dreams of the goats; all day the kids bleat for him. He enters a little barque; he sails for the Scandinavian coast, and goes to the very cottage too narrow for his childhood, and eats again the barken bread of Sweden, and drinks its bitter beer; bares his forehead to the storm; sits on the rocks, and there he dies. "Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt," said old Jacob, "but I will lie with my fathers: bury me in their burying-place."

Then the scholar becomes an antiquary; he likes not young men unless he know their grandfathers before. The young woman looks in the newspaper for the marriages, the old man for the deaths. The young man's eye looks forward; the world is "all before him, where to choose." It is a hard world; he does not know it: he works little, and hopes much. The middle-aged man looks around at the present; he has found out that it is a hard world: he hopes less, and works more. The old man looks back on the fields he has trod; "this is the tree I planted; this is my footprint;" and he loves his old house, his old carriage, cat, dog, staff, and friend. In lands where the vine grows, I have seen an old man sit all day long, a sunny autumn day, before his cottage door, in a great arm-chair, his old dog couched at his feet, in the genial sun. The autumn wind played with the old man's venerable hairs; above him on the wall, purpling in the sunlight, hung the full clusters of the grape, ripening and maturing yet more. The two were just alike; the wind stirred the vine leaves, and they fell; stirred the old man's hair, and it whitened yet more. Both were waiting for the spirit in them to be fully ripe. The young man looks forward; the old man looks back. How far-extended the shadows lie in the setting sun; the steeple a mile long reaching across the plain, as the sun stretches out the hills in grotesque dimensions. So are the events of life in the old man's consciousness.

I spoke the other day of the Dangers of early Manhood; and again of those of later Manhood; of the period of passion, and the period of calculation. This, I take it,—I say it with reverence, and under correction,—is the danger of old age:—that the man should be querulous; should slight the needful and appropriate joys of youth and manhood; that he should be timid of all things which are new, consult with his fear, and not his hope, and look backwards and not forth. These, it seems to me, are the special dangers of the old man. Pardon me, venerable persons, if I mistake! I read from only without; you can answer from within. It is said that men seldom get a new idea after five and forty. It is perhaps true; but it has also been my fortune to know men and women who in their old age had a long Indian Summer, in which the grass grew fresh again, and the landscape had a richness, a mellowness of outline and of tint; yea! and a beauty, too, which it had lacked in earlier years. What has been exceptional in my observation, may perhaps be instantial, and belong to the nature of old men.

Divers diseases invade the flesh in old age, which, most of them, it seems to me, come from our general ignorance, or the violation of Nature's laws. Childhood is unnatural. Half the human race is cradled in the arms of death. The pains we cause at birth, the pains we bear, are alike unnatural. So are many of the pains of old age. The old lion, buffalo, eagle, elephant, dies as the apple falls from the tree, with little pain. So have I seen a pine-tree in the woods, old, dry at its root, weak in its limbs, capped with age-resembling snow; it stood there, and seemed like to stand; but a little touch of wind drove it headlong, and it fell with long-resounding crash. The next morning the woodsman is astonished that the old tree lies prostrate on the ground. This is a natural death, for the old tree, and the venerable man. But our cradle and couch are haunted now with disease, which I doubt not wisdom, knowledge of Nature's laws, and the true religion of the flesh, will one day enable us to avoid. Now sickness attends our rising up and our lying down. These infirmities I pass by.

The man reaps in his old age as he sowed in his youth

and his manhood. He ripens what he grew. The quantity and the quality of his life are the result of all his time. If he has been faithful to his better nature, true to his conscience, and his heart, and his soul,—in his old age he often reaps a most abundant reward in the richest delight of his own quiet consciousness. Private selfishness is less now than ever before. He loves the Eternal Justice of God, the great Higher Law. Once his hot blood tempted him, and he broke perhaps that law; now he thinks thereof with grief at the wrong he made others suffer: though he clasps his hands and thanks God for the lesson he has learned even from his sin. He heeds now the great attraction whereby all things gravitate towards God. He knows there is a swift Justice for nations and for men, and he says to the youth: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth! Let thy heart cheer thee! But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into account. Hear the sum of the whole matter: Love God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man."

In the old saint, perhaps instinctive conscience, like his natural eye and ear, has grown more feeble. But yet the well-developed moral sense, strengthened by inward and outward observation, and enforced by the momentum which long habit gives, endows him with greater moral power than he ever had before;

> "And old experience doth attain
> To something like prophetic strain."

You cannot swerve him from the right. What bribe could make old Washington unjust, or Franklin false to his love for the slave, the sick, the poor, for all men? In long time, our good old man has got a great estate of righteousness, which no genius could have accumulated in a short period.

His affections now are greater than before; yet it is not the mere power of instinctive affection—the connubial instinct which loves a mate, or the parental instinct which loves a child; but a general human, reflective, volitional love, not sharpened by animal desire, not narrowed by affiliated bounds, but coming of his freedom, not his bondage. Of mere instinctive affection he has perhaps less than before. That fades with the age which needs it,

as the blossom falls when the fruit is set, and the leaves when it has grown. With this pure human affection, he loves his venerable wife better than before; also him: they have been rising in love these sixty or seventy summers. Once, in their spring of life, their connubial love bloomed passion-red; then it grew to summer beauty; now it is autumn ripe, it is all affection; there is no romance; passion is gone. It is affection ripened by half a hundred years of use and wont; a gradual marriage sloping up to a complete wedlock of the man and woman. Now the two are one; dualism is unified in a long life. This unity and its joy—that is God's benediction on a true marriage, fifty years a-making. All the wife's spiritual womanhood is his; all the spiritual manhood of the husband is hers. Neither has lost; both have won; each has gained the whole value of what was exchanged in this matrimonial barter.

The old grandfather loves his grandchild better than once he loved his new-born boy or girl; with less instinctive fire of paterni but with more general human love; for his character has grown more and more. Once his love was the fiery particle drawn from a voltaic pile of only five and twenty years; now it gathers power from the combination of eighty several summers and winters. He loves with all that added force. He no longer limits his love to his family; it has not the intensity of instinct, nor its narrow bound. His heart went to school in his early passionate love. Marriage, paternity, brought new education to his affections. His babies taught him. Early his affection rode on the shoulders of his wife; then on the backs of his boy and girl; now it overtakes all men—friends, countrymen; yea, all whom God's love broods over in the world's wide nest.

Once, when hot blood was in him, he said, Aha! among the trumpets, smelling the battle afar off, and he loved war; now he hates strife, loves peace. And so he honours the gentle deeds of charity, benevolence, and piety. General Jacksons, and Nelsons, and Napoleons, and Wellingtons, are not heroes of his: the good Samaritans are his beloved; not the great soldiers, with their innumerable trains of artillery and baggage-wagons, and their famous "great victories;" it is the good maiden, the angel of

mercy in the neighbouring street; it is the kind man, whose wise heart goes out as medicine to the sick, the old, the feeble, the poor,—these are his heroes. The heroism of hate he has trod under-foot; the heroism of love—he looks up and thanks God for that.

His religion is deeper, more inward than before. It is not doctrine alone, or mere form. There is little rapture; he is still, and knows that God is Father and Mother of the world. His religion is love of God; faith and trust in Him; rest, tranquillity, peace for his soul. From the wide field of time, deeply laboured for eighty years, he reaps a great harvest of life, and now his sheaves are with him; the eternal riches of heaven are poured into his lap. He fears nothing; he loves. His hope for this world is something small; for his immortal future he knows no bounds. The farmer tills his ground for the annual harvest, but his good tillage fertilizes the soil; and without his thinking of it, his farm grows richer and his estate larger. And just so it is with the true, good man: as the years go by him, his estate of religion greatens, and becomes more and more. The little flowers of humanity—a warm spring day calls them out, where there is no deepness of earth: but to raise the great oak-trees of human righteousness, you want a deep, rich soil, and threescore, fourscore, fivescore summers and winters, for the tree to grow in, broadly buttressed below, broad-branched above, to wrestle with the winds, and take the sunshine of God's heaven on its top. And that is the value of long life—it is an opportunity to grow great and ripen through. It is out of Time and Nature that man makes life; long time is needed, as well as noble nature, for a great life.

Alas for the man who has lived meanly! his old age is a sad and wintry day, whereunto the spring offers no promise. He sowed the wind: it is the storm he reaps.

Here is an old sensualist. In his youth he threw the reins on the neck of every lust which wars against the soul, and so went through the period of instinctive Passion. In his graver years, his Calculation was only for the appetites of the flesh, ambition for sensual delight. Now he is old, his desire has become habit; but the in-

struments of his appetite are dull, broken, worn out. He recollects the wine and the debauch once rejoiced in; now they have lost their relish; his costly meat turns to gall in him. He remembers nothing but his feasting, and his riot, and his debauch. He has had his skin-full of animal gluttony, nothing more. He thinks of the time when the flesh was strong about him. So the Hebrews, whom Moses led out of thraldom, remembered the leeks and the onions and the garlic which they did eat in Egypt freely, and said, "Carry us back to Egypt, that we may serve false gods, and be full." He dreams of his old life: some night of sickness, when opium has drugged him to sleep, it comes up once more. His old fellow-sinners have risen from the dead; they prepare the feast; they pour the wine; they sing the filthy, ribald song; the lewd woman comes in his dream;—alas! it is only a dream; he wakes with his gout and his chagrin. Let us leave him with his bottle and his bloat, his recollection and his gout. Poor old man!—his grey hairs not venerable, but stained with drunkenness and lust. So have I seen, in other lands, the snows of winter fall on what was once a mountain that spouted cataracts of fire. Now all is cold, and the volcano's crater is but a bowl of ice, which no mortal summer can melt; and underneath it there are the scoriæ and the lava which the volcano threw up in its heat—cold, barren, ugly to look on. O young man! young maid! would you be buried alive, to die of rot, in such a grave as that?

Here is an old man who loved nothing but money. Instead of a conscience, heart, and soul, he had only a three-headed greedy-worm, which longed for money—copper, silver, gold. In youth, he minted his passion into current coin, courting an estate; in manhood, he was ambitious only for gold; in old age, he has his money, the passion and ambition therefor; the triple greedy-worm, three times more covetous than before. As the powers of the body fail, his lust for gold grows fiercer in that decay:

> "——the interest table is his creed,
> His paternoster, and his decalogue."

How afraid he is of the assessor! In youth avarice was a passion; in manhood calculation; but now the passion

is stronger, the calculation more intense, and there is the habit of covetousness, eighty years old. The accumulated fall of eighty winters gives his covetousness such a momentum as carries him with swiftly accelerated speed down into the bottomless pit of hunkerism. He has no care for right and justice: no love for mankind; none for God. Mammon is his sole divinity, that Godhead a trinity of coin. What an end of what a life! His grey hairs cover only an estate; he is worth nothing.

Did you ever see the old age of a covetous man who for eighty years had gathered gold, and nothing more? I have seen more than one such. It is the sin of New England. I spoke of poverty the other day; of want which I saw in the cellars of Broad Street and Burgess Alley, in the attics of the North End Block. There is no want so squalid, no misery of poverty so desperate, as the consciousness of an old miser, in his old age of covetousness. Pass him by.

Here is an old man who in his long time has sought only power and place, and thence-accruing fame. His passion was all ambition, his calculation only for place and name. With strange fire he sacrificed youth and manhood on this unholy altar. He has not yet won the place he longs for; nor never will. He sets his hungry eye on it, and grows more reckless in the means that seem to lead thereto, "for he knoweth that his time is short." Nothing stands between him and what he aims at. Friendship is nothing; his plighted word is only the oath of a dicer who throws for place. His past life is nothing; he will eat his own words, though hard as cannon-shot. His conscience is nothing; his affections nothing; his soul nothing; and his God—that is a word to swear by, and beguile the people with. He knows no Higher Law—only the passion of the many, the ambition of the few.

I have seen the old age of such; I remember their faces—the face of a volcano, rent with hidden fires, scarred and streaked with the ruin they had thrown out from their own ambition! God save you from such an end, and me!

Look around you and see men conspicuous in American politics to-day—men whose passions of the flesh time has cooled, and tamed, and chilled, and frozen through; but

the passion for place wars still in their members, and yet more against the soul. Old men, they mock at conscience; they pimp and pander to every vice of America. "Give us place," say they, "and you shall have Cuba and Mexico for your Slavery; yea, the bloodhounds of America shall bark from the Mexique Bay to the British line, and the tide of Slavery shall break over the Rocky Mountains' top!"

Would you wish such an old age? Look at the Senate of the United States to-day; at the aspirants for the presidency, I know not how many of them. Nay, look in less eminent places, for the ambition of obscurer men, and see how it eats out the heart of such as time has spared.

The old age of the sensualist, the miser, of him who worships only place, and fame, and power—what a judgment it is against the sin! I have no eloquence, nor nature's simple power of speech, to paint in words the ghastly fact.

There was once a man in America, of large talent and extraordinary culture, born also of a family venerable for the great men it had cradled in its bosom. In him, the discordant vices of passion and calculation seemed both to culminate. He was the favourite of a powerful party: thirty-five times did the Federalist delegates in Congress give their voice for him. They made him Vice-President of the nation. He was possessed of almost every loathly sin that human nature could hold, and yet hold together. He was more than eighty years old when he died. But the old age of Aaron Burr—would you wish worse punishment for the worst man that ever lived? The nation hated him, not without cause; for he turned a traitor to America. Within him all was rotten: he was a faithless friend; a subtle and merciless enemy; a deceitful father, who sought to sell the honour of his only daughter, and she a wife and mother too! Some night in his last days, when pain, most ignominiously got, kept him from sleep, perhaps conscience came and beat the reveillez in his heart and his memory gave up its dead; the buried victims of his deceit rose before him, of his treason, his lust, his malice, his covetousness, and his revenge! Pass him by, only fit "to point a moral and adorn a tale,"—perhaps the worst great man Young America ever gendered in her bosom.

Here is a woman who has sought chiefly the admiration of the world, the praise of men. Her life is vanity long drawn out, the only frailty which joins her to mankind. Now she is an old woman of fashion—wearing still the garments of her earlier prime, which short and scanty as they were, are yet a world too wide for shrunken age to fill. How ill those gaudy ruffles become the withered dew-lap that hangs beneath her chin! Her life has been a long cheat; she has had no calculation but for vanity, setting a trap to catch a compliment: it is fit her age should be a deceit. That colour—the painter did it; the plumpness—it is artificial; the hair—false; the teeth—are purchased at a shop; the hands—all glove and bone, and great big veins; the tongue—it was always artificial and false; it needs no other change. Yet she apes the tread of youth. Alas! poor fly! For this you have lived; nay, flirted!—it is not life. This, then, is the end of the waltzes, and polkas, and cracoviennes; this is the pay for the morning study over dress, the afternoon prattle about it, the evening spent in putting on this gaudy attire! Poor creature! in youth, a worm; in womanhood, a butterfly; in old age, your wings all tattered, your plumage rent, a "fingered moth,"—old, shrivelled, sick, perching on nothing, and perishing into dust; the laughter of the witty; the scorn of the thoughtless; only the pity of the wise and good! What a three-act drama is her life—youth, womanhood, age! Vanity sits there in front of the stage, known but not seen, and prompts the play—the words, the grimace. What music it is! from the opera, the lewdest and the wildest, and from the Catholic Judgment-Hymn, mingled together in the same confusion which behind the scenes her toilet table brings to view, where you also find "puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billet-doux." Now the audience is tired of her, and laughs at the hollow voice, the bleary eye, the spindle limbs. The curtain falls; the farce is at an end. Poor old butterfly! Death and Vanity carry her between them to fitting burial and the Mercy-Seat of the Infinite God.

What a beautiful thing is the old age which crowns a noble life, of rich or poor! How fair are the latter days of many a woman—wife, mother, sister, aunt, friend—

whom you and I have known! How proud were the last years of Washington; the old age of Franklin! How beautiful in his late autumn is Alexander Von Humboldt! The momentum of manliness bears on the venerable man beyond his four and eightieth year. There you see the value of time. It takes much to make a great life, as to make a great estate. No amount of genius that God ever gives a man could enable one to achieve at forty what Von Humboldt has only done at more than eighty. It was so with Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Leibnitz, every great man who has awed the world by the action of a mighty intellect, with corresponding culture.

These are men of high talent, station, genius perhaps. But the old age of a Quaker tailor in Philadelphia and New York was not a whit less fair. The philanthropy of Isaac Hopper blessed the land; in his manhood it enriched the world; in his old age it beautified his own life, giving an added glory to his soul.

How many farmers, mechanics, traders, servants, how many mothers, wives, and aunts have you and I known, whose last days were a handsome finish to a handsome life; the Christian ornament on the tall column of time! Their old age was the slow setting of the sun, which left

> "The smile of his departure spread
> O'er the warm-coloured heaven and ruddy mountain-head."

Miss Kindly is aunt to everybody, and has been so long that none remember to the contrary. The little children love her; she helped their grandmothers to bridal ornaments, threescore years ago. Nay, this boy's grandfather found the way to college lay through her pocket. Generations not her own rise up and call her blessed. To this man's father her patient toil gave the first start in life. That great fortune—when it was a seed, she carried it in her hand. That wide river of reputation ran out of the cup her bounty filled. Now she is old; very old. The little children, who cling about her, with open mouth, and great round eyes, wonder that anybody should ever be so old; or that Aunt Kindly ever had a mother to kiss her mouth. To them she is coeval with the sun, and like that, an institution of the country. At Christmas, they think she is the wife of Saint Nicholas himself, such an advent

is there of blessings from her hand. She has helped lay a Messiah in many a poor man's crib.

Her hands are thin; her voice feeble; her back is bent; she walks with a staff—the best limb of the three. She wears a cap of antique pattern, yet of her own nice make. She has great round spectacles, and holds her book away off the other side of the candle when she reads. For more than sixty years she has been a special providence to the family. How she used to go forth—the very charity of God—to soothe, and heal, and bless! How industrious are her hands! how thoughtful and witty that fertile mind! Her heart has gathered power to love in all the eighty-six years of her toilsome life. When the birth-angel came to a related house, she was there to be the mother's mother; ay, mother also to the new-born baby's soul. And when the wings of death flapped in the street, and shook a neighbour's door, she smoothed down the pillow for the fainting head; she soothed and cheered the spirit of the waiting man, opening the curtains of heaven that he might look through and see the welcoming face of the dear Infinite Mother: nay, she put the wings of her own strong, experienced piety under him, and sought to bear him up.

Now, these things are passed by. No, they are not passed by; they are recollected in the memory of the dear God, and every good deed she has done is treasured in her own heart. The bulb shuts up the summer in its breast which in winter will come out a fragrant hyacinth. Stratum after stratum, her good works are laid up, imperishable, in the geology of her character.

It is near noon now. She is alone. She has been thoughtful all day, talking inwardly to herself. The family notice it, and say nothing. In her chamber, from a private drawer, she takes a little casket; and from thence a book, gilt-edged and clasped; but the clasp is worn, the gilding is old, the binding faded by long use. Her hands tremble as she opens it. First she reads her own name, on the fly-leaf; only her Christian name, "Agnes," and the date. Sixty-eight years ago this day it was written there, in a clear, youthful, clerkly hand—with a little tremble in it, as if the heart beat over-quick. It is very well worn, the dear old Bible. It opens of its

own accord, at the fourteenth chapter of St John. There is a little folded piece of paper there: it touches the first verse and the twenty-seventh. She sees neither: she reads both out of her soul:—"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God; believe also in me:" "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you." She opens the paper. There is a little brown dust in it; perhaps the remnant of a flower. She takes the precious relic in her hand, made cold by emotion. She drops a tear on it, and the dust is transfigured before her eyes; it is a red rose of the spring, not quite half blown, dewy fresh. She is old no longer. It is not Aunt Kindly now; it is sweet Agnes, as the maiden of eighteen was, eight and sixty years ago, one day in May, when all nature was wooesome and winning and every flower-bell rung in the marriage of the year. Her lover had just put that red rose of the spring into her hand, and the good God another in her cheek, not quite half-blown, dewy fresh.[1] The young man's arm is round her; her brown curls fall on his shoulder; she feels his breath on her face, his cheek on hers; their lips join, and like two morning dew-drops in that rose, their two loves rush into one. But the youth must wander to a far land. They will think of each other as they look at the North Star. She bids him take her Bible. He saw the North Star hang over the turrets of many a foreign town. His soul went to God—there is as straight a road from India as from any other spot—and his Bible came back to her—the Divine love in it, without the human lover, the leaf turned down at the blessed words of St John, first and twenty-seventh of the fourteenth chapter. She put the rose there to note the spot; what marks the thought holds now the symbol of their youthful love. To-day her soul is with him, her maiden soul with his angel soul; and one day the two, like two dew-drops, will rush into one immortal wedlock, and the old age of earth shall become eternal youth in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Grandfather is old. His back also is bent. In the street he sees crowds of men looking dreadfully young,

[1] This image is borrowed from a popular story by Hans Christian Anderson.

and walking fearfully swift. He wonders where all the old folks are. Once, when a boy, he could not find people young enough for him, and sidled up to any young stranger he met on Sundays, wondering why God made the world so old. Now he goes to Commencement to see his grandsons take their degree, and is astonished at the youth of the audience. "This is new," he says; "it did not use to be so fifty years before." At meeting, the minister seems surprisingly young, the audience young; and he looks round and is astonished that there are so few venerable heads. The audience seems not decorous; they come in late, and hurry off early, clapping the doors to after them with irreverent bang. But Grandfather is decorous, well-mannered, early in his seat: jostled, he jostles not again; elbowed, he returns it not; crowded, he thinks no evil. He is gentlemanly to the rude, obliging to the insolent and vulgar;—for Grandfather is a gentleman, not puffed up with mere money, but edified with well-grown manliness. Time has dignified his good-manners.

Now it is night. Grandfather sits by his old-fashioned fire. The family are all a-bed. He draws his old-fashioned chair nearer to the hearth. On the stand which his mother gave him are the candlesticks, also of old time. The candles are three-quarters burnt down; the fire on the hearth also is low. He has been thoughtful all day, talking half to himself, chanting a bit of verse, humming a snatch of an old tune. He kissed more tenderly than common his youngest grand-daughter,—the family pet,—before she went to bed. He takes out of his bosom a little locket: nobody ever sees it. Therein are two little twists of hair; common hair: it might be yours or mine. But as Grandfather looks at them, the outer twist of hair becomes a whole head of most ambrosial curls. He remembers the stolen interviews, the meetings by moonlight, and how sweet the evening star looked, and how he laid his hand on another's shoulder. "You are my evening star," quoth he. He remembers

> "The fountain-heads, and pathless groves,
> Places that pale Passion loves.'

He thinks of his bridal hour.

In the stillness of the great slumbering town, while life

breaks only in a quiet ripple on all those hundred thousand lips, he hears no noise; but with wintry hands solemnly the church clock strikes the midnight hour. In his locket he looks again. This other twist is the hair of his firstborn son. At this same hour of midnight, once —it is now many years ago—when the long agony was over he knelt and prayed—"My God, I thank thee that I, though father, am still a husband too! O, what have I done! what am I, that unto me, thus a life should be given, and another spared!" Now he has children, and children's children—the joy of his old age. But for many a year his wife has looked to him from beyond the Evening Star; yea, still she is herself the Evening Star, yet more beautiful; a star that never sets; not mortal wife now, but angel; and he says, "How long, O Lord? when lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, that mine eyes may see thy salvation?"

The last stick on his andirons snaps asunder, and falls outward. Two faintly smoking brands stand there. Grandfather lays them together, and they flame up; the two smokes are one united flame. "Even so let it be in heaven," says Grandfather.

Dr Priestly, when he was young, preached that old age was the happiest time of life; and when he was himself eighty he wrote, "I have found it so." But the old age of the glutton, the fop, the miser, the hunter after place, the bigot, the shrew, what would that be? Think of the old age of a Boston Kidnapper! It is only a noble, manly life, full of piety, which makes old age beautiful. Then we ripen for Eternity, and the dear God looks down from heaven, and lays his hand on the venerable head: "Come, thou beloved, inherit the Kingdom prepared for thee."

A DISCOURSE OF THE FUNCTION OF A TEACHER OF RELIGION IN THESE TIMES.

PREACHED AT THE ORDINATION OF MOSES G. KIMBALL, AS MINISTER OF THE FREE CHURCH AT BARRE, WORCESTER COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 1855.

If the inhabitants of this town were to engage a scientific man to come and dwell amongst you, as Superintendent of Agriculture, and teach you practical farming, it is plain what purpose you would set before him, for which he must point out the way and furnish the scientific means. You would say, "Show us how to obtain, continually, the richest crops; of the most valuable quality; in quantity, the greatest; with the least labour, in the shortest time. Show us the means to that end."

It is plain what you would expect of him. He must understand his business thoroughly; farming as a science —the philosophy of the thing—teaching by ideas, and showing the reason of the matter; farming, likewise, as an art—the practice of the thing—the application of his science to your soil — demonstrating by fact the truth of his words, and thus proving the expediency of his thought.

Of course he ought to know the soil and climate of the special place; what crops best suit the particular circumstances. He must become familiar with the prevalent mode of farming in the town and neighbourhood, and know its good and ill. He should understand the ancestral prejudices he has to encounter, which oppose his science and his art. It would be well for him to know the history of agriculture—general of the world, and special of this place—

understanding what experiments have been already tried with profit, what with failure. He should keep his eye open to the agriculture of mankind; ever on the look-out for new animals, plants, roots, seeds, scions, and better varieties of the old stock; for richer fertilizers of the soil —no islands of guano too remote for him to think upon; for superior modes of tillage; and more effective tools, whereby man could do more human work with less human toil. He would naturally confer with other farmers about him and all round the world, men of science or of practice, analyzing soils, enriching farms, greatening the crops. He would stimulate his townsmen to think about their work, and to create new use and new beauty on their estates. He need not be very anxious that all should think just as their fathers had done, or plough and shovel with instruments of the old pattern.

But what if he were ignorant and knew no more than others about him, and was yet called "the Honourable Agricultural Superintendent," "the Reverend Professor of Farming," and had been "ordained with ancient ceremonies!" It is plain he could not teach what he did not know. If he knew only the theory, not also the practice, he would be only a half teacher.

What if he was lazy, and would not learn? or bigoted, and stuck in some old form of agriculture, and would never depart from it—the Hebrew, from the time when there was no blacksmith in Israel, and men filed them ploughshares out of lumps of cold iron? or the Catholic form, in the days of Gregory VII., or Innocent III.? or the Reformed agriculture, from Luther's and Calvin's time? or the Puritanic, from the age of New England Cotton and Davenport? What if he took some ancient heathen author, Cato, Varro, Virgil, or Columella, as an infallible guide, and insisted that no crop, however seemingly excellent, could be good for anything unless won from the earth in that old-fashioned way; or declared that no blessing would fall upon a man's field unless he were a professing follower of Elias the Tishbite, and broke up ground with a team not less than four and twenty oxen strong!

What if he were perverse and cowardly, and saw the great errors in the common mode of farming—the theory wrong, the practice imperfect—and knew how to correct

them, doubling the harvest while halving the toil, but yet would never tell his better way lest he should hurt the feelings of the people, be thought "radical" and "revolutionary," a "free-thinker," and should lead men to doubt whether it were best to plough and sow at all; or lest they should deny that bread could feed men, or even be raised out of the ground? What if he were silent for fear he should spoil the sale of acorns and beech nuts by introducing wheat and Indian corn? What if he knew a perfect cure for the disease which makes the potato gather blackness, but would not tell it lest the bountiful supply should hurt the market of some men who had whole acres of onions and cabbages looking up for a high price?

What if he knew of better breeds of swine, horses, and horned cattle; better grains, fruits, flowers, vegetables; of better tools to work with, superior barns and houses to store or to live in, and yet kept it all to himself, fearing that he should be called hard names by such farmers as preferred pounding their corn with pestle and mortar to grinding it in a water-mill?

What if he spent his time in abusing the soil, declaring it capable of no good thing, ruined, lost, depraved, declaring it was impossible to make any improvement in husbandry, that neither material nor human nature would admit of another step in that direction; and took pains to defend the worst faults of the popular agriculture, insisting that the poorest farms were actually the richest, that tares were indispensable to wheat, the field of the sluggard the best symbol of good farming; and flamed out into elegant wrath against all who dared have better farms and larger crops than their fathers rejoiced in! What could you say to all that?

But on the other hand, what if your Superintendent of Farming went manfully to his work, studied the soil and put in fitting crops, pointed out improvements to be made in fencing, draining, ploughing, planting, harvesting; introduced better varieties of cattle and of plants; set the people to think about their work, and so made the head save the hands; taught the children to observe the magnificent beauty of New England flowers and trees, and taught them the great laws of agriculture, whereby "each bush doth put its glory on like a gemmed bride," and in

three years' time had doubled the productions of the town!

You have asked this young man to superintend your spiritual culture, not the farming of your fields, but of yourself. He must attend to the highest of all husbandry, and rear the noblest crops of use and beauty. Out of the soil of human nature he is to produce great harvests of human character. He is to teach the Science of Humanity —the Art of Life. You say to him, "Oh, young man, come and show us how to become the noblest men and women, achieving the greatest amount of human character of the highest human kind, with the least waste of effort, in the shortest time. Show us the ideal character, the end we ought to reach; the ideal life, the means thereto. We take you for helper, friend, counsellor, teacher; not our master to command, not the slave of our pride and prejudice to be commanded; not our vicar, to be, to do, and to suffer in our place, for we do not wish to live by attorney, but each of us on his own account. Be our teacher, helping in the highest work of life. As we commit to you this highest trust, we expect your highest efforts, your noblest thoughts, the manly prayers of your quickened and ever greatening life."

Man is a spirit, organized in matter. In our being is one element, which connects us consciously with God, the Cause and Providence of the universe, imminent in all and yet transcending all. It is an essential faculty of human nature, belonging to the ontology of man, and gives indications of its presence in all men above the rank of the idiot; the rudiments appear even in him. It acts in all stages of human history; in the mere wild-man, where it appears in only its instinctive form; in the savage, who has no conception of a God, only of the Divine in nature, a mighty force, differing in kind from matter and from man; in the barbarian, who makes concrete Deities out of plants, and animals, and elements, and men; and in the most enlightened philosophers who compose the Academies of Science at Paris or Berlin.

It is also the strongest faculty in man, overmastering all the rest; easily excited, not soon put down, and often

running to the wildest and most fanatical excess. In rude stages of human history it sometimes appears as a wild instinct, rushing with blind and headlong violence, a lust after God, a rage of barbaric devotion. Thus in the mythic tale it drives Abraham to sacrifice his only son, and in actual history it impels Cybele's priests and a whole nation of Jews to odious mutilation of the flesh; or maddens Hebrew priests who call God Jehovah, to butcher their brother priests who named him Baal. Among civilized men, in its abnormal form of action, it can silence and subdue the most powerful human affection. In three-fourths of Christendom the most unnatural celibacy is counted a virtue; how it separates the lover from the one beloved, the husband from his wife, yea, the mother from her child! Its power is visibly written in the great buildings of ancient and modern Rome, of Greece, Palestine, India, Egypt, of all the world. Their pyramids and temples, catecombs and churches, are unmistakable monuments of its power. From old Byzantium to modern Dublin, from Cadiz to Archangel, all Europe is crossed with its sign-manual; the handwriting of humanity upon the world is dotted throughout with visible marks of this mighty yet most subtle force.

See what institutions it has built up—the most widely-extended in time and space. The plough passed over Jerusalem eighteen hundred years ago; the temple of Solomon and his successors has gone to the ground; no family speak now the language of King David; yet on every seventh day in Boston, New York, Cincinnati, Mexico, in all the great cities of the western world, the scattered Israelites assemble to keep the old religious law. Moses has been dead three thousand years, yet in the name of Jehovah his hand still circumcises every Hebrew boy. What hold the popular theology takes on Christendom! Empires are but waves in the sea of Buddhism, Christianity, or Islamism, which ripples into Popes, and Czars, and Sultans, or swells into kingdoms and commonwealths that last whole centuries: these perish, while the great religious institution, like the ocean of waters, still holds on. To-day, a hundred and fifty millions worship as Mohammed bids; two hundred and fifty millions count Jesus of Nazareth as God; while twice that number—so

'tis said—reckon Buddha as their heavenly Lord. Such great combinations of men have never been produced except by the religious element. Theological ideas override the distinctions of nations, nay of races, and the Mongolian Chinese accept the theologic thought of the Caucasian from Hindostan.

History and philosophy alike show that this is the master-element in man—designed for a high place in the administration of his affairs; for as a man is spirit as well as body, immortal not less than meant for time, and has a personal consciousness of his relation to the Cause and Providence of all, so it is obviously needful that this element which deals with eternity and God, should live upon the strongest and deepest root in human nature. The fact is plain; the meaning and the purpose not hard to see: it has only powers proportionate to its work.

But hitherto the religious element has been the tyrant over all the other faculties of man. None has made such great mistakes, run to such excesses, been accompanied with such cruelty, and caused such wide-spread desolation. All human development is accomplished through the help of experiments which fail. What errors do men make in their agriculture and mechanic arts; how many unsuccessful attempts before they produce a loom, or an axe, simplest of tools! What mistakes in organizing the family! what errors in forming the state! And even now how much suffering comes from the false political doctrines men adhere to! Look at the countries which are ruined by the bad governments established therein. Asia Minor was once the world's garden, now it is laid waste: what cities have perished there; what kingdoms gone to the ground: for a thousand years its soil has hardly borne a single great man—conspicuous for art, letters, science, commerce, or aught save cruelty in war, and rapacity in peace! In the land whence the ideas which now make green the world once went so gladly forth, camels and asses seem the only undegenerate production. Yet it once teemed with cities, full of wholesome life. But all these mistakes are slight compared with the wanderings of the religious faculty in its historical progress. Consider the human sacrifices, the mutilations of the body, or the spirit, which have been regarded as the highest acts of homage to God.

What is the Russian's subjection to a Czar compared to a Christian's worship of a conception of God who creates millions of millions of men only for the pleasure of squelching them down in bottomless and eternal hell! In the Crimea, just now, in a single night, the allies burned up a year's provisions for three-and-thirty thousand men—the bread of all Springfield and Worcester for a twelve-month; in fourteen months a quarter of a million Russian soldiers have perished; Moravia is yet black with the desolations of the Thirty Years' war, whose last battle was fought more than two hundred years ago. But what is all the waste of war, the destruction of property, the butchery of men; what are all the abominations of slavery, compared to the eternal torment of a single soul! Yet it is the common belief of Christendom that not one man, but millions of millions of men, are, with unmitigated agony, to be trod for ever under the fiery foot of God and the Devil, partners in this Dance of the Second Death which never ends, and treads down a majority of all that are!

A man may be mastered by his bodily lusts, the lowest appetites of the flesh, eaten up by his own dogs and swine, the victim of drunkenness and debauchery. All about us there are examples of this fate! But he may also be mastered by his religious instinct, become its slave, and equally ruined. The Spanish inquisitor, thinking he did God service in burning His children for their mode of worship, is a worse form of ruin than the drunkard! Which has most completely gone to waste, the poor uneducated harlot of the street, or the well-endowed minister in Boston, who in the name of God calls on his parish to kidnap a fugitive slave? Consider the millions of men, tormented by dreadful fear, who dare not think, lest God should overhear their doubt—for He is thought to be always eavesdropping, and ever on the watch at the keyhole of human consciousness, hearkening for the footfall of a wandering thought—stab at and run them through, and then impale them on his thunderbolt, fixed in the eternal flame? The evil caused by the perverted appetites of the body is truly vast; but it is nothing when compared to the wide-extending mischief which comes from the perversion of this deepest and strongest instinct of the soul. When a little stream in a country town overflows its banks, a few faggots are swept away from the farmer's woodpile, a ground squirrel is

drowned out of his hole, a log washed off from the saw mill, a lamb, perchance, or a straggling calf, in some lonely pasture, may perish by the flood; next week the bowed grass erects itself, and the freshet is forgot. But when the Amazon breaks over its continental bounds, it sweeps great cities from the earth; it floods wide provinces with its nauseous deluge of slime, which reeks its miasma into the air, poisoning with pestilence one half the tropic land. It is as easy for a giant to strike in the wrong place, as for a girl, and the mischief must be proportionate to the strength of stroke. Look over Christendom, Heathendom, and see what ghastly evils come from these mistakes.

The function of a sectarian Priest is to minister to the perversion of this faculty, to perpetuate the error—sometimes he knows it, oftenest he knows it not, but is one of the tools wherewith mankind makes the faulty experiment. But the teacher of a true form of religion is to take this most powerful element, and direct it to its normal work; is to use this force in promoting the general development and elevation of mankind; to husband the periodical inundation of the Amazon, and therewith fertilize whole tropic realms, making the earth bring forth abundantly, not for seven years only, but for seventy times seven, yea, for ever. In that soil which hitherto has borne such flowers as the pyramids, temples, and churches of the world, with peaceful virtues in many a realm, such weeds as Popery and the false doctrines of the popular theology of Christendom, he is to rear the fairest and most useful plants of humanity, health, wisdom, justice, benevolence, piety, whole harvests of welfare for mankind.

Using the word Religion in its wide sense, in the religion of the enlightened man of these times, there are involved three things—Feelings, Ideas, Actions,—which follow in this historic and logical order. At first his religious faculty works instinctively, the result is emotional, a mere Feeling; the next result is reflexional, the intellect is busy, and thereby he becomes conscious of what instinctively went on, and the feeling leads to an Idea; at length it is volitional, in consequence of the feeling and the idea he wills, and determines the inward phenomena to an outward Action, a deed.

The teacher of religion is to deal with all these—to work in the plane of Feelings, the department of sentiment, where life is emotional; in that of Ideas, the department of theology, where life is likewise speculative; in that of Actions, the department of morality, where life is also practical. As he is to address the intellect, work with ideas, and by these to excite the feelings, and thereby stir men to action, let me begin with the department of theology and thence proceed.

I. Of the teacher of religion in relation to Ideas of theology. There is one great scheme of thought called "Christianity," or more properly, the "Christian theology." It is common to all sects in Christendom. Of this, the "liberal" have least, the illiberal most; but they differ only quantitatively—in amount, not kind. This is the common soil of Christendom, whence grow such great trees as Catholicism and Protestantism, with the various offshoots from each. From this common inheritance the minister is to take what he thinks true and useful, to reject what he thinks useless, to remove out of his way what he finds baneful.

But he is not to draw merely from this well, he is to get all the theologic truth he can find in other schemes of theology, not disdaining to be taught by an enemy. For two thousand years France has cultivated the olive and the vine, but lately has translated to her soil Chinese treatises on this branch of husbandry, and found profit in the "Heathens' counsel." The early Christians held to the Scriptures of the hostile Jew before they thought of claiming "inspiration" for their own Gospels and Epistles. Nay, Paul of Tarsus did not disdain to quote heathen poets for authority that man is God's child—"for we also are his offspring." The teacher of religion must not be limited to these ancient wells of knowledge, he must dig new springs filled from the Universal Source, the great Mountain of Truth. He is to take no church for master—Hebrew, Heathen, Mohammedan, or Christian, Protestant or Catholic; no man, no sect, no word; but all which can aid for helps. He is not to be content with the "Said so" of any man, however famous or great; only with the "It is so" of fact, or the "I find it so" of his own personal ex-

perience. He has no right to foreclose his mind against truth from any source.

In dealing with theological ideas his work will be twofold; first, Negative and militant, destroying a false theology; next, Positive and constructant, building up a true theology. Look a moment at each.

1. Of the Negative and destructive work of theology. Here the teacher will have much to do—both general and special work.

For the popular theology, common to all Christendom, logically rests on this supposition: It is wholly impossible for man, by himself, to ascertain any moral or religous truth; he cannot know that the soul is immortal, that there is a God, that it is right to love men, and wrong to hate; he may have "opinions," but they will be "only whims," belief in immortality, "one guess among many;" there can be no knowledge of justice, no practice of charity and forgiveness. But God has made a miraculous communication of doctrines on matters pertaining to religion; these are complete, containing all the truth that man will ever need to know on religion; and perfect, having no error at all: man must accept these as ultimate authority in all that pertains to religion—to religous sentiments, ideas, and actions. The sum of these miraculous doctrines is called the "supernatural revelation;" it is the peculiar heritage of Christians, though part of it was designed originally for the Jews, and previously delivered to them, who were once the "peculiar people," "the Lord's own," but now in consequence of their refusing the new revelation, which repeals the old, are "cast off" and rejected." The Catholic maintains that the Roman Church is the exclusive depository of this miraculous revelation, and the Protestant limits it to the Bible; but both, and all their manifold sects, claim to rest on this foundation—the Word of God, supernatural, miraculous, exclusive, and infallible. Hence their ministers profess to derive the "power to bind and loose," and claim to teach with an authority superior to reason, conscience, the heart and soul of man. Hence they call their doctrine "divine;" all else is only "human teaching," "founded in reason, but with no authority." Hence the-

ology is called "sacred," not because true, and so far as true—for then the truths which Thales, or which Plato, taught were also "sacred" and "divine;" but as miraculous in its origin, coming from a source which is outside of human consciousness, and above all the doubts of men. In virtue of this miraculous revelation, the meanest priest ever let loose from Rome, or the smallest possible minister ever brooded into motion at Oberlin or Princeton, is supposed to know more about God, man, and the relation between them, than Socrates and all the "uninspired" philosophers, from Aristotle of Stagyra down to Baur of Tubingen, could ever find out with all the thinking of their mighty heads.

Now in theology the teacher must show that there is no philosophic or historical foundation for this vast fiction, it is "such stuff as dreams are made of;" there is no supernatural, miraculous, or infallible revelation; the Roman Church has none such, the Protestant none; it is not in the Bible, but the universe is the only Scripture of God—material nature its Old Testament, human nature the New, and in both fresh leaves get written over every day. He must show that inspiration comes not supernaturally and exceptionally, by the miraculous act of God, but naturally and instantially, by the normal act of man, and is proportionate to the individual's powers and use thereof; that the test of inspiration is in the doctrine, not outside thereof; its truth the only proof that what man thinks is also thought by God; that all truth is equally His word, and they who discover it are alike inspired—whether truth pertaining to astronomy or religion; that the highest authority for any doctrine is its agreement with fact—facts of observation, or of intuitive or demonstrative consciousness. Surely no man, no sect, no book, nor oracle is master to a single soul, for each man is born a new Adam—

> "The world is all before him where to choose
> His place of rest, and Providence his guide."

In this resistance to the pretended authority of an alleged miraculous revelation, there is much to do. The teacher must preach the disadvantages of such a revelation, as Luther preached against the "infallible" Pope

and Roman Church, or as Jesus thundered and lightened against the vain pretensions of the ancient Pharisees. Who shall dare bind the spirit of man and say, "Thus far shalt thou reason, but no farther, and here shall thy proud thoughts be stayed?" The smallest priest! But who can stay the movement of those orbs in the spiritual heaven? Only He, who in the constitution of our spirit, gave us that great charter which secures unbounded freedom of thought. A spoiled child, a little wayward-minded girl, idiotic even, may command a thousand adult persons, if they be but slaves! What if they are men?

Once the hierarchy of philosophers sought to shut men in the midland seas, between the two Herculos' Pillars of Aristotle and Ptolemy; none must sail forth with venturous keel into the wide ocean, seeking for scientific truth; man must only paddle about the shores, where the masters had named all the headlands and marked out the way. What honour do we pay to men who broke the spell that bound the race? Once kings forbid all thought and speech about the state, the subject must not doubt, but only answer and obey. Where will such tyrants go? Let future Cromwells say. In theology, such men are forbid to think, to doubt, to reason, and inquire. "Search the Scripture" is made to mean, accept it as an idol. So we see men chained by the neck to some post of authority, their heads also tied down to their feet, for ever hobbling round and round, picking some trampled grass on the closely nibbled spot, yet counting their limping stumble as the divine march of the heavenly host, and the clanking of their chains as the music of the spheres, most grateful unto God. Now and then some minister comes down and moves off the human cattle, and ties them out to feed on some other bit of well-trod land, while all before us reaches out the heavenly pasture, for which we long, and faint, and die.

It is an amazing spectacle! Modern science has shown that the theological astronomy, geology, and geography are mixed with whims, which overlay their facts; that the theological history is false in its chief particulars, relating to the origin and development of mankind; that its metaphysics are often absurd; its chief premises false; that the whole tree is of gradual growth; and still men have

the hardihood to pretend it is all divine, all true, and that every truth in the science and morals of our times, nay, any piety and benevolence in human consciousness, has come from the miraculous revelation, and this alone! Truly it is a teacher's duty to expose this claim, so groundless, so wicked, so absurd, and refer men to the perpetual revelation from God, in the facts of his world of matter and of man.

So much for the general basis on which the popular theology of Christendom is said to rest, a basis of fancy. Next, a word of some of its erroneous doctrines.

There are five doctrines common to the theology of Christendom, namely—the false idea of God, as imperfect in power, wisdom, justice, benevolence, and holiness; the false idea of man, as fallen, depraved, and by nature lost; the false idea of the relation between God and man—a relation of perpetual antagonism, man naturally hating God, and God hating "fallen" and "depraved" man; the false idea of inspiration, that it comes only by a miracle on God's part, not by normal action on man's; and the false idea of salvation, that it is from the "wrath of God," who is "a consuming fire" breaking out against "poor human nature," by the "atoning blood of Christ," that is, by the death of Jesus of Nazareth, which appeased the "wrath of God;" and on condition of belief in this popular theology, especially of these five false ideas.

I will not now dwell on these monstrous doctrines.[1] But this scheme of theology stands in the way of man's progressive improvement. It impedes human progress more than all the vices of passion, drunkenness, and debauchery; more than all the abominations of slavery, which puts the chains on every eighth man in this republican democracy! Accordingly the teacher who wishes to secure a normal development of the religious faculties of men, and to direct their powers so as to produce the highest human welfare, must use all the weapons of science

[1] See "A Discourse of the Relation between the Ecclesiastical Institutions and the Religious Consciousness of the American People, delivered at Longwood, Chester County, Pennsylvania, May 12th, 1850," (New York, 1850,) and "Sermons of Theism, Atheism, and the Popular Theology." (Boston, 1853.)

against the errors of this theology, opposing them as Luther opposed the Pope and Roman Church, as Paul and Jesus the polytheism and pharisaism of their time; yes, as Moses withstood the idolatry of Egypt—not with ill-nature, with abuse, but with all the weapons of fair argument.

I know it is sometimes said that a minister ought never to attempt to correct errors in the theology of his time; that must be left to the laity or outsiders, for "the Christian church is to be reformed, not from within, but only from without," and "the minister has no right to disturb the peace of the churches by pointing out their false doctrines or wicked practices." Such counsel have I had from men of "high standing" in the Christian pulpit, who practise also what they preach. Let them follow their own advice. But alas, if the deceitful lead the blind!

This destruction and denial is always a painful work. It is the misfortune of the times that now so much of it must needs be done, but the other part will be full of delight.

2. Of the Positive and constructant work in theology.

In general he has to show that theology is a human science, whereof piety is the primordial sentiment, and morality the act. A religious life is the practice whereof a true theology is the science. Here, as elsewhere, man is master, and learns by his own experiment; no man is so great as mankind, no scheme of theology to be accepted as a finality; the past is subject to revision by the present, which must also give an account of itself to the future. A real theology must be made up from facts of consciousness and observation, and like all science is capable of demonstration.

In special the teacher must set forth the great positive doctrines of a scientific theology, which is founded on these facts. To follow the five-fold division above referred to, he is to teach the philosophic idea of God, of man, of the relation between the two, of inspiration, and of salvation.

Of the philosophic idea of God. If the teacher be able-minded, and fitly furnished with spiritual culture, starting from facts of consciousness in himself, of observation in

the world of matter, aided by the history of the past and the achievements of the present, it is not difficult for him to set forth and establish the idea of God as infinitely perfect; philosophically from these materials he constructs the idea of the infinite God, the absolute Being, with no limitation. God must have all conceivable perfection—the perfection of Being, self-existence, eternity of duration, endless and without beginning; of power, all mightiness; of mind, all knowingness; of conscience, all rightcousness; of affection, all lovingness; of soul, all holiness, absolute fidelity to himself. These words describe the idea of God, and distinguish it from all others, but these qualities do not exhaust the perfections of God, only our present conception thereof. To one with more and greater faculties, other qualities must doubtless appear in his conception of the Infinite. Look up at the heavens and consider the worlds of matter, revolving there visible to the unarmed sight; multiply those dots of light by the function of the telescope, consider each but the centre of a system of other worlds all full of motion and of conscious life; with a microscope study a bit of Dover chalk, or slatestone from Berlin, and see in a single inch the million-million tiny monuments of what once was life, its epitaph now published in such small print; close your eyes, and imagine those astral schemes of suns each as the centre of a planetary system, and every orb as full of life as this, but variant in character as in circumstance and condition, then ask if you can comprehend the consciousness of the Being who is the Cause and Providence of all this—ay, of the creator of a single drop of ink! What we can know of the infinite God is but a whisper from a world of harmony. Still, though inadequate, the idea may be free from contradiction, and contain no thought which does not represent a quality in God, as the fly on the dome of St Peter's, who sees but an inch, may yet see the nail he perches on. Thus conscious of the limited extent of human powers, I like not to call God *personal*, lest my idea be invested with the defect of human personality; or *impersonal*, lest the limits of matter be crowded about the idea of God. For certainly God's infinite consciousness must differ from our finite and dependent consciousness as the creative power of

the universe differs from the instinct action of an unconscious baby grasping the finger of its twin-born mate. The quality and quantity of the infinite consciousness we cannot analyze and so exhaustingly comprehend. Still this positive fact remains to us—the infinitely perfect God. This I think the highest thought which mankind has yet reached, the grandest idea in the consciousness of humanity.

How different is this from the theological conception of God whereof the ethical character is as revolting as the Trinitarian arithmetic thereof is absurd. What a difference between the infinite God and the wrathful God of the popular theology—as He appears in the New England Primer—in Michael Angelo's last Judgment—in every "Christian Scheme of Divinity!"

Of the philosophic idea of man. Starting from indisputable facts it is easy to show what a noble nature there is in man, so endowed with vast capabilities. I wonder that any one can think meanly of this chief creation of God, can talk of "poor human nature;" why, in comparison with the instinctive aspiration of our nature the loftiest achievements of a Leibnitz or a Jesus seem low and little. What a history is there behind us! Man began his career with no inheritance save what was covered with his skin; without material or spiritual property—no house, nor tool, nor garment, not a breakfast laid up for to-morrow, no science, law, literature, customs, habits, manners, or even language; out of him was material nature, in him rude human nature. See what has thence risen up in the thirty or forty thousand years of his probable existence. What a panorama of triumph lies there behind us! Surely the history of man is a continual victory, the triumph of what is spiritual over the merely animal, of conscious reflection over mere brute, instinctive, animal desire. It is the Infinite Providence which planned the campaign and guides the victorious march. Even the errors and follies of mankind—the experiments which fail—are steps forward, only not straight forward. The teacher ought to understand the historical development of mankind, that in the panorama of what has been done he

may demonstrate the nobility of our nature, and show the certainty of our triumph at the last over all the transient evils of our condition.

He may take the body for his text, far more "wonderfully made" than the Hebrew psalmist could conceive of three thousand years ago, but hopefully more than "fearfully." What masterly workmanship it is which puts these elements together—this "handful of enchanted dust," making an instrument so perfect for a purpose which is so grand! He can unfold and publish the body's laws, the celestial mechanics of this microcosm, as the astronomers disclose the mode of action of the forces in the sky. Every law of the body is a commandment from the most high God, who enacts geology in tables of stone, but in scriptures of flesh has writ the law of flesh.

He may take the part of man not material for his theme, and show the unity of spirit in such diversity of faculties—intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious—disclosing the natural function of each, all in their order combining to achieve the destination of mankind.

He can show that human nature, on the whole, is just what God meant it to be, no mistake of his careless hand, not damaged by the "Devil;" that it is God's perfect means for his perfect purpose; that the parts are also adequate to their several functions—the body exactly fitted to the body's work, the intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious faculties exactly suited to the duty they have to do. He can show this by metaphysical analysis, and demonstrate it all by deductions from the infinite perfection of God; or by the synthesis of actual history, show how all these continually work together for good. For the freedom of man—his power of self-rule, direct by his simple will, or mediate through outward helps of circumstance and condition—enlarges like his property and other power, from age to age; and the quantity of human virtue is ever on the increase. Human nature unfolds itself by trial, by experiment, wherein man makes as many mistakes as a child in learning to think, to speak, to walk, to read and write, yet learns by every error, yea, by every sin. The misstep of the individual or nation is but one incident of the universal human desire of perfection as end and progress as the means thereto; and as we prefer health, strength, and

beauty before sickness and deformity, before pain and death, not less naturally does man, at last, reject all but truth in things intellectual, all save justice in things moral, and holds fast to holiness and love. Our history is not a retreat, it is a march forward. Mythology fancies a "fall;" history records an ascension. The tempting devil disappears—a theologic fancy of the younger age; the guiding Providence remains a scientific fact. Nothing is more clearly demonstrated than the continual progress of humanity, I mean, the regular growth of every excellence. Let a man make a pictorial view of any special art—the trade of the smith, farmer, carpenter, clothier, sailor; or of any science—arithmetic, astronomy, chemistry; or of morality and religion; and since the historic age began, see what a continual progress there has been! Combine all these into one grand panorama of humanity, and lo, what a monument of our greatness, what a prophecy of our destination it affords! Man started with nothing; in one or two thousand generations see what he has done; this naked and penniless Adam turns out the thriftiest child of God. Behold his material and spiritual estate!

The religious teacher will set forth the ideal of what man should be; it is the prayer of human nature, through the imagination ascending from every human faculty, which longs for its complete and perfect development. What a future this ideal foretells, to be made by man, as the past has been, partly by his instinctive action outrunning his personal will, partly by his conscious calculation, setting the purpose, and thereto devising means! This is plain—there must be a destination proportionate to the nature of man, a fulfilment of the soul's desires. By the facts of the past and present, history shows that it is likely to be so, and by the facts of consciousness—intuitive and demonstrative—by deduction from the idea of a perfect God, human nature shows that it must be so and shall. Indeed the infinite perfection of God is collateral security for the promise, made in our nature itself, that normal desire shall ultimately have its satisfaction, and the ideal of man shall, one day, be the actual of humanity.

Man's immortality must be dwelt upon. This can be shown not by things outside of us, not at all by quoting stories which cannot be true, but by the development of

facts given instinctively in the consciousness of all. How easy it is to show that an immortality of blessedness awaits the race and each individual thereof, wherefrom not even the wickedest of men shall ultimately be cut off. Surely the Infinite God must have made man so that humanity contains all the forces needful for the perfect realization of the ideal thereof.

The philosophic idea of man gathered up from common and notorious facts, how different it is from the "poor human nature" we read of in theological books, and which so many ministers whine over in sermon and in prayer!

Of the philosophic idea of the relation between God and man. This must correspond to the character of God himself. In the world of man as the world of matter He must be a perfect Cause to create, a perfect Providence to direct; must create and provide from a perfect motive—the desire to bless; for a perfect purpose—for blessedness as end; and furnish perfect means, adequate to achieve the end. On God's part it must be a relation of love—an infinite desire to bless, attended with infinite power to bless. God is capable of nothing else. Of all possible worlds He must have made the best. The evil passions which the Christian theology ascribe to God are impossible. He a "jealous God;" he a "consuming fire;" he have "wrath," and keep it "for ever!" he torment men for his own delight of vengeance; his Wisdom mock when their fear cometh! He say to a single child of humanity, "Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels; I never knew you!" Even the meanest of mortal mothers meets her son, all stained with blood which cries out against him, and at the foot of the gallows folds the felon in her arms, with "My son! my son! would to God that I could die for thee!" And do you believe that the Cause and Providence of yonder stars and of these little flowers will doom to endless hell a child of His! Shame on the worse than heathen thought! A savage might easily make the monstrous error, attributing his own love of vengeance to his God; overburthened with veneration for antiquity, even the noblest men might repeat the mistake; and

celibate monks of the dark ages—victims of the darker theology which ruled them with its whip of fear—might rejoice in the cruel, dreadful thought. Let us be just to all, gentle in our judgment of theologic as other wanderings—but let no thoughtful man do less than spurn the malignant doctrine far away. Suffering there is; suffering there may be hereafter, must be, perhaps, but the present and the future misery must be overruled for the good of all, the good of each; it is God's medicine, not poison from a "Devil."

There are no types in human affairs to represent the relation of the Infinite God to man. The words of tenderest and most purely affectional human intimacy best convey the idea; so let us call God our Father and our Mother too.

How different is this from the theological idea of the relation between God and man—the imperfect God and the depraved man—the antagonistic relation!

Of the philosophic idea of inspiration. The Infinite God is everywhere in the world of matter; its existence is a sign of Him, for infinite power is the background and condition of these particles of dust. Here is matter—take one step and there is God, it is not possible without him—the derived depending on the Original. Matter is manifest to the senses, God to the spirit. He acts where He is, not anywhere an idle God. The powers of matter are but modes of God's activity; Nature lives in Him—without His continual active presence therein Nature were not. He

> "Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
> Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
> Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
> Spreads undivided, operates unspent."
> "To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
> He fills, He bounds, connects and equals all."

He is equally present in the world of man, the world of spirit: it also depends on Him; He lives in it, and it in Him. He is also active therein. God is nowhere idle. Human life as much depends on Him as the life of Nature. Just so far as any human faculty acts after its normal mode, it is inspired. Truth of thought is the test of intellectual

inspiration; justice, of moral; love, of affectional; holiness, self reliant integrity, of religious inspiration.

All the world of matter is subject to law—constant modes of operation of the forces thereof, which of necessity are always kept. So there are modes of operation for the human spirit, whereto obedience is partly of free will; for while matter is wholly bound, man is partially free. When we act in obedience to these ideal laws, then God works with them, through them, in them; we are inspired by him. So inspiration is not a transient fact, exceptional in the history of mankind, and depending on the arbitrary caprice of an imperfect Deity, but constant, instantial, and resulting from the laws which the Infinite God enacts in the constitution of man; its quality ever the same, its degree varying only with the original genius of each person, and the faithful use thereof. We grow and live thereon as the tree grows by the vegetative power residing in itself, and in the earth, the water, the air, and sun. Miraculous inspiration exists only as a dream, or a cheat; a fancy of the self-deceived, or a pretence of the deceivers. Normal inspiration is not limited to theological or religious men, but is the common heritage of all. The housewife in her kitchen, the smith in his shop, the philosopher, poet, statesman, trader, all may alike communicate with God, and receive liberal supply. Inspiration of this sort belongs to the nature of man's spirit, which depends on Infinite God as the flesh on finite matter; one may have much, another little, and the use and form thereof will be most exceedingly unlike—as vegetation differs in the forest, field, and garden, but all comes from the same elemental air and water, earth and sun. It is not limited to one age, but is diffused to all, its amount continually increasing with the higher forms of human life.

How much this differs from the theological idea of inspiration—miraculous, unnatural, and often "revealing" things absurd and monstrous!

Of the philosophic idea of salvation. To realize the ideal of human nature, that is, salvation; to develope the body into its natural strength, health, and beauty; to educate the spirit, all its faculties at normal work, harmoniously acting together, all men attaining their natural

discipline, development, and delight! Part of it we look for in the next world, and for that rely upon the infinite perfection of God; part of it we toil for here, and shall achieve it here. To do a man's best, to try to do his best, that is to be "acceptable to God," to "make our peace with Him," who is of all preserver and defence. There is no "wrath of God" to be saved from; no "vicarious atonement" to be saved by; no miracle is wrought by God; He asks only normal service of man, and as He is infinitely perfect, so must He have arranged all things, that all shall work for good at last, mankind be saved, and no son of perdition e'er be lost. Suffering there is—there will be. I, at least, cannot show why it was needful in the world's great plan, nor see the steps by which this suffering will end, nor always see the special purpose that it serves—but with the certainty of such a God, the ultimate salvation of all is itself made sure.

How different is all this from the theological idea of salvation—"hard to be won, and only by a few!"

How much we need a theology like this—a natural theology, scientifically derived from the world of matter and of man, the product of religious feeling and philosophic thought! Such ideas of God, of man, of the relation between the two; of inspiration, of salvation—it is what mankind longs for, as painters long for artistic loveliness, and scholars for scientific truth; yea, as hungry men long for their daily bread. The philosopher wants a theology as comprehensive as his science—a God with wisdom and with power immanent in all the universe, and yet transcending that. The philanthropist wants it not less, a God who loves all men. Yea, men and women all throughout the land desire a theology like this, which shall legitimate the instinctive emotions of reverence, and love, and trust in God, that to their spirits, careful and troubled about many things, shall give the comfort and the hope and peace for which they sigh! How much doubt there is in all the churches which the minister cannot appease; how much hunger he can never still, because he offers only that old barbaric theology which suited the rudeness of a savage age, and is rejected by the enlightened consciousness of this! How much truth is there outside of all the

sects—how much justice and benevolence, and noblest piety, which they cannot bring in, because this popular theology, like a destroying angel armed with a flaming fiery sword, struts evermore before the church's gate, barring men off from beneath the Tree of Life, anxious to hew off the head of lofty men, and gash and frighten all such as be of gentle, holy heart.

So much for the teacher's relation to ideas, the instrument he is to work withal, and waken the religious feelings into life.

II. Of the teacher of religion in his relation to the feelings connected with religion.

With theological ideas of this scientific stamp it is easy to rouse the religious feelings, the great master emotions, and then rear up that whole brood of beautiful affections, whose nest such an idea of God broods over and warms to life. If God be preached to men as endowed with infinite perfection, He at once is felt as the object of desire for every spiritual faculty; to the mind, Infinite Wisdom—the author of all truth and beauty; to the conscience, Infinite Justice—the Creator of all right; to the affections, Infinite Love—the Father and Mother of all things which are; to the soul, Infinite Holiness—absolute fidelity. So here is presented to men the Infinite God—perfectly powerful, wise, just, loving, and holy, self-subsistent, self-reliant. Is any one an atheist to such a God? No, not one! Who can fail to love Him? the philosopher, who throughout all the world seeks truth, the science of things? the poet and the artist, who hunt the world of things and thoughts all through for shapes and images of beauty? the moralist, who asks for ideal justice and rejoices to find it imperative in Nature and in man? the philanthropist, who would fold to his great heart pirates and murderers, and bless the abandoned harlot of the street, yea, have mercy on the "Christian" stealer of men, in Boston? the sentimentalist of piety, who loves devotion for itself, who would only lie low before the Divine as an anemone beneath the sky, and with no dissevering thought, in joyous prayer would mix and lose his personal being in mystic communion with the Infinite consciousness of God?

Surely all these in the Infinite God will find more than the object which elsewhere they vainly seek. And the great mass of men and women, in our cares and sorrows, in our daily joys and not infrequent sins, we all cry out for the infinite perfection of God, and bless the feet of such as bring the idea upon their tongues revealing words of peace! Love of God springs up at once, and strongly grows; what tranquillity follows, what youthful play of all the faculties at first, at length, what manly work! What joyous and long-continued delight in God! We long then to keep all the commandments He writes in Nature and in man. When it is God's voice that speaks, how reverently shall we all listen for each oracle. How shall I respect my own body when I know it is a human Sinai, where more than ten commandments are given—writ on tables which no angry Moses ever breaks, kept eternally in the universe, which is the Ark of God's covenant, holding also the branch that buds for ever, and the memorial-bread of many a finished pilgrimage. From this mountain God never withdraws, no thundering trumpets forbid approach, but the Father's voice therein for ever speaks. And how shall I reverence this spiritual essence which I call myself, where instinct and reflection for ever preach their Sermon on the Mount, full of beatitudes for whose hears and heeds! How readily will all the generous feelings towards men spring up when such a Sun of Righteousness shines down from heaven with natural inspiration in her beams; not New England grass grows readier beneath the skies of June. How dutiful becomes instinctive desire; how desirable is conscious duty then! Is the way hard and steep to climb? the difficulty is lessened at the thought of God, and full of noblest aspirations, heartiest trust, the brave man sallies forth, victory perching on his banner.

What consolation will such ideas afford men in their sorrows! Let me know that Infinite Wisdom planned all this world, a causal Providence, and perfect Love inspired the plan; that it will all turn out triumphant at the last—not a soul lost in the eternal march, no suffering wasted, not a tear-drop without its compensation, not a sin but shall be overruled for good at last; that all has been foreseen and all provided for, and mankind furnished with powers quite adequate to achieve the end, for all, for each:

what a new motive have I for active toil! yea, what consolation in the worst defeat! I can gird my loins with strength, and go forth to any work; or defeated, wounded, conquered, I can fold my arms in triumph still, looking to the eternal victory.

The teacher of religion is with men in their joy and in their sorrow. Old age and youth pass under his eye; he is the patron saint of the crutch and the cradle, and with such ideas—the grandest weapon of this age—he can excite such pious emotions in the maiden and the youth as shall make all their life a glorious day, full of manly and womanly work, full of human victory; and in the experienced heart of age he can kindle such a flame of hope, and trust, and love, as shall adorn the evening with warm and tranquil glories—saffron and purple, green and gold—all round the peaceful sky, and draw down the sweet influence of heaven into that victorious consciousness, and while his mortal years become like the morning star, paling and waning its ineffectual fire, the immortal shall advance to all the triumphs of eternal day.

Hitherto priests and ministers of all forms of religion—I blame them not—have sought to waken emotions, mostly of fear before the God of their fancy, a dark and dreadful God. With such ideas of Him, they had no more which they could do. So the popular religion has been starved with fear, and with malignant emotions even worse. It is under this dreadful whip that men have builded up those pyramids, and mosques, and temples, and cathedrals, and formed those great institutions which outlast empires. Such things belong to the beginning of our pilgrimage. When man was a child he thought as a child. Now shall he put childish things away.

So much for the teacher's relation to the feelings connected with religion.

III. Of the teacher of religion in relation to acts of morality. Religion begins in feeling, the emotional germ; it goes on to thought, the intellectual blade, budding, leafing, and flowering forth prophetic; it becomes an act, a deed, the moral fruit—full of bread of life for to-day, full of seeds of life for the unbounded future. Morality is keeping the natural laws written of God in the constitution

of matter and of man. These we first feel by our instinctive emotions, and next know by the calculation of reflective thought, and at last practise by the will, making the ideal of emotion and of thought the actual of practice in daily life. The whole great field of morals belongs to the jurisdiction of the teacher of religion.

1. He must show the practical relation of man to the world of matter, the basis of all our endeavours. Here he must set forth the duty of industry, of thrift, of temperance —the normal use of what Nature affords, or industry and thrift provides. He is to learn the natural rule of conduct by studying the constitution of matter, the constitution of man, and then apply this law of God to human life. He can show what use man should make of his mastery over the material world, the function of property, the product of industry, in the development of the individual and the race, and explain the services which vassal matter may render to imperial man. He is to point out the conditions on which we depend for health, strength, long life, and beauty—all the perfections of the body—the way to live so as to keep a sound spirit in sound flesh—handsome and strong. These things belong to what may be called the material basis of morals.

2. He must also teach the true human morals, the rule of conduct which should govern man in regulating his own personal affairs, and in his dealings with mankind. Here, too, from the constitution of human nature he is to unfold the rule of conduct, the eternal right, and make the application thereof to all the forms of collective and of individual human life.

Here come the great morals which we call politics—the relation of state with state, and of the government with the people. This comes directly under the cognizance of the teacher of religion, especially in this country, where all the people are the government, and where such an intense interest is felt in political affairs, and so many take an active part in the practical business of making and administering the laws. If politicians commonly aim to provide for their own party, or at best only for their own nation, he must consult for the eternal right, which is the joint good of all the people, yea, of mankind also. They derive their rule of conduct from the expediency of to-day,

nay, often only from the whim of the moment, he his from the justice of eternity; they consult only about measures, and defer to statutes of the realm, compacts, compromises, and the constitution of the land, he communes with principles, and defers only to the laws of God, the constitution of the universe.

He must preach on politics, not as the representative of a party but of mankind, and report not the mean counsels of a political economy, which consults for one party or one nation, for one day alone, but declare the sublime oracles of political morality, which looks to the welfare of all parties, all nations, and throughout all time. He must know no race but the human, no class but men and women, no ultimate lawgiver but God, whose statute book is the world of matter and the world of men—justice the sole finality.

I know some men say "Religion has nothing to do with politics, and the minister should never preach on the political rights and duties of the citizens of democratic America!" They mean morality has nothing to do with politics: that is, in making and administering the laws, no consideration is to be had of charity, truth, justice, or common honesty. Certainly they mean nothing else. On what other supposition can we be asked to support the fugitive slave bill and the decisions of kidnappers' courts! I know men in pulpits, "men fearfully and wonderfully made," who say "The minister should have nothing to do with politics"—except to vote and talk as his task-masters and owners imperatively command; that is, he should never preach in favour of good laws or against wicked ones, never set forth the great principles of morality which underlie the welfare of the state, nor point out measures to embody and apply mere principles; and never, never expose the false principles and wicked measures which would lead the community to ruin. "For Christianity has nothing to do with the politics of men; the minister's business is 'to preach the gospel,' 'to save souls,' he speaks 'as to dying men,' who have here no continuing city, but only seek one which is to come; therefore is the Sunday left for preaching on what does not concern this world!" Such ministers ought to have nothing to do with anything, and soon will have what they ought.

The teacher of religion nothing to do with the political actions of the people, one whole department of conduct—which most intimately concerns the welfare and the character of every child—left out of the jurisdiction of morality and religion! Look at the conduct of the founders of the great world-sects! Had Mohammed nothing to do with politics? On the ruins of the idolatrous structures of old, out of Hebrew and Christian stones, cemented with his own wisdom and folly, he built up the commonwealth of Islam, wherein an hundred and fifty million men now find repose. Moses nothing to do with politics! As the poetic tale relates, he led two million men out of Egypt, and therefrom built up a new state with ideas of politics far in advance of his times. Jesus nothing to do with politics! In the fourth Gospel—not an historic document, but mainly a religious fiction—he says, "My kingdom is not of this world;" but in the more authentic documents, the first Gospel and the third, he promises that his twelve disciples "shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel!" and actually laid down the moral principles of political conduct, which, if applied according to his direction, would revolutionize every state, and make a Christian commonwealth of the world. Actually at this day the words of Mohammed, Moses, and Jesus are appealed to as the supreme law in Turkish, Hebrew, and Roman courts. What an intense irony it is when the professor of the gospel says, "Christianity has nothing to do with politics," and the professor of law tells his pupils "Christianity is part of the common law," "the Bible the foundation of common jurisprudence!"

All the great Christian leaders were also men of politics, their word of religion became flesh in the state. Look at Augustine, at Ambrose of Milan, at the patriarchs of the Eastern churches, at the metropolitans of the West, at Gregory VII., at Innocent III., all men whose word became law! Augustine was a Roman organizer, filled with the ideas of Paul of Tarsus. What an influence he had in destroying the pagan state, and building what he esteemed the "City of God." Bernard, the monk of Clairvaux, made popes and unmade them, and out of his lap shook an army of crusaders upon the Holy Land. Bossuet had as lasting an influence on France as the "grand mon-

arque;" Louis claimed to be himself the state, but the priest was so more than the king. Luther controlled kingdoms; the word of powerful John Calvin became the constitution of Geneva, it moulded the Swiss cantons, and had a powerful political influence wherever thoughts of that great thinker went.

Look at the founders of the American churches—at Robinson, and Cotton, and Hooker, and Davenport, and Wilson; at Higginson and Roger Williams! Ask Edwards and Hopkins, ask Mayhew and Channing, if the minister should teach that politics have nothing to do with religion, and religion nothing to do with politics! You might as well say the sailor had nothing to do with the ocean, and New England manufacturers no concern with the Connecticut and the Merrimac, with wind, or water, or fire! Look at the actual politics of America, at the open denial of the higher law, at the politician's insolent mock against all religion, and see the need that the teacher should lay down the great moral principles of human nature, and apply them to the political measures of the day. It is only when the minister is a purchased slave that he tells men Christianity has nothing to do with political conduct, and praises the practical atheist as the "model Christian."

Then come the morals of society. Here the teacher must look at the dealings of men in their relations of industry and of charity, and set forth the mutual duty of the strong and the weak, the employer and the employed, the educated and the ignorant, the many and the few. Natural religion must be applied to life in all departments of industrial activity; farming, manufacturing, buying and selling, must all be conducted on the principles of the Christian religion, that is, of natural justice. The religious word must become religious flesh—great, wide, deep, universal religious life. The deceit and fraud of all kinds of business he must rebuke, and show the better way, deriving the rule of conduct from human nature itself.

I know there are men, yea, ministers, who think that "Christianity" has no more to do with "business" than with politics. It must not be applied to the liquor trade, or the money trade, or the slave trade, or to any of the

practical dealings of man with man. It is not "works" but "faith" which "save" the soul. So the minister who preaches a "gospel" which has nothing to do with politics, preaches also a gospel which has nothing to do with buying and selling, with honesty and dishonesty, with any actual concern of practical life. Leave them and pass them by, not without blame, but yet with pity too.

Look at the social life of man—see what waste of toil and the material it wins; here suffering from unearned excess, there from want not merited; here degradation from idleness, there from long-continued and unremitting drudgery. See the vices, the crimes, which come from the evil conditions in which we are born and bred! These things are not always to continue. Defects in our social machinery are as much capable of a remedy as in our mills for corn or cotton. It is for the minister to make ready the materials with which better forms of society shall one day be made. If possible, he is to prepare the idea thereof; nay, to organize it if he can. What a service will the man render to humanity who shall improve the mechanism of society, as Fulton and Watt the mechanism of the shops, and organize men into a community, as they matter into mills. Yet it is all possible, and it is something to see the possibility.

Then come the morals of the family. Here are the domestic relations of man and woman—lover and beloved, husband and wife; of parent and child, of relatives, friends, members of the same household. Here, too, the teacher is to learn the rule of conduct from human nature itself and teach a real morality—applying religious emotions and theological ideas to domestic life. The family requires amendment not less than the community and state.

There is an ill-concealed distrust of our present domestic relations, a scepticism much more profound than meets the ear or careless eye. The community is uneasy, yet knows not what to do. See, on the one hand, the great amount of unnatural celibacy, continually increasing; and on the other, the odious vice which so mars soul and body in an earthly hell. The two extremes lie plain before the thoughtful man, both unnatural, and one most wicked and brutal. Besides, the increase of divorces, the alteration

of laws so as to facilitate the separation of man and wife, not for one offence alone, but for any which is a breach of wedlock, the fact that women so often seek divorce from their husbands—for drunkenness and other analogous causes—all show that a silent revolution is taking place in the old ideas of the family. Future good will doubtless come of this, but present evil and licentiousness is also to be looked for before we attain the normal state. Many European novels which are characteristic of this age bring to light the steps of this revolution.

The old theology subordinates woman to man. In the tenth commandment she is part of her husband's property, and so, for his sake, must not be "coveted." In the "divine" schedule of property she is put between the house and the man-slave; not so valuable as the real estate, but first in the inventory of chattels personal. Natural religion will change all this. When woman is regarded as the equal of man, and the family is based on that idea, there will follow a revolution of which no one, as yet, knows the peaceful, blessed consequence not only to the family, but the community and the state.

Most important of all come the morals of the individual. The teacher of religion must seek to make all men noble. He is not to make any one after the likeness of another—in the image of Beecher or Channing, Calvin, Luther, Peter, Paul or Jesus, Moses or Mohammed, but to quicken, to guide, and help each man gain the highest form of human nature that he is capable of attaining to; to help each become a man, feeling, thinking, willing, living on his own account, faithful to his special individuality of soul. I wish men understood this, that their individuality is as sacred before God as that of Jesus or of Moses; and you are no more to sacrifice your manhood to them than they theirs to you. Respect for your manhood or womanhood, how small soever your gifts may be, is the first of all duties. As I defend my body against all outward attacks, and keep whole my limbs, so must I cherish the integrity of my spirit, take no man's mind or conscience, heart or soul, for my master—the helpful all for helps, for despots none. I am more important to myself than Moses, Jesus, all men, can be to me. Holiness, the fidelity to my own

consciousness, is the first of manly and womanly duties; that kept, all others follow sure.

With such feelings of love to God, such ideas of God, of man, of their relation, of inspiration, of salvation—with such actions, it is easy to see what form a free church will take. It will be an assembly of men seeking to help each other in their religious growth and development, wakening feelings of piety, attaining ideas of theology, doing deeds of morality, living a great, manly, religious life; attempting, also, to help the religious development of mankind. There must be no fetter on the free spirit of man. Let all men be welcome here—the believer and the unbeliever, the Calvinist with his absurd trinity of imperfect Godheads, the atheist with his absurdity of denial; diverse in creed, we are all brothers in humanity. Of course you will have such sacraments of help as shall prove helpful. To me, the ordinances of religion are piety and morality; others ask bread, and wine, and water; yet others, a hundred other things. Let each walk the human road, and take what crutch of support, what staff of ornament he will.

In these three departments the teacher of religion is to show the ideal of human conduct, derived from the constitution of man, by the help of the past and the present; and then point out the means which lead to such an end, persuading men to keep their nature's law, and to achieve its purpose. Nay, he must go before them with his life, and demonstrate by his character, his fact of life, what he sets forth as theory thereof; he cannot teach what he does not know. He only leads who goes before. A good farm is the best argument for good farming. A mean man can teach nobleness only as the frost makes fire. A low man in a pulpit—ignoble, lazy, bigoted, selfish, vulgar—what a curse he is to any town; an incubus, a nightmare, pressing the slumberous church! A lofty man, large minded, well trained, with a great conscience, a wide, rich heart, and above all things a great pious soul, who instinctively loves God with all his might—what a blessing to any town is a manly and womanly minister like that! Let him preach the absolute religion, the service of God by the normal use, discipline, development,

and delight of every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit, and all the powers we possess over matter and man; let him set forth the five great ideas of a scientific theology, and what an affluence of good will rain down from him!

What a field is before the religious teacher, what work to be done, what opportunities to do it all! Here is a false theology to be destroyed; but so destroyed that even every good brick or nail shall be kept safe; nay, the old rubbish is to be shot into the deep to make firm land whereon to erect anew; out of the good of the past and present a scientific theology, with many a blessed institution, is to be builded up. Great vices are to be corrected —war between state and state; oppression of the government over the people; there is the slave to be set free—bound not less in the chain of "Christian theology" than with the constitution and the law. The American church is the great blood-hound which watches the plantations of the South, baying against freedom with most terrific howl. "Christian theology" never breaks a fetter, while Christian religion will set all men free! Woman is to be treated as the equivalent of man, with the same natural, essential, equal, and unalienable rights; here is a reform which at once affects one half the human race, and then the other half. Here is drunkenness to be abolished; it is to the Free States what slavery is to the South. Poverty must be got rid of, and ignorance overcome; covetousness, fraud, violence, all the manifold forms of crime, vices of passion, the worser vices of calculation, these are the foes which he must face, rout, overcome. What noble institutions shall he help humanity build up!

The great obstacle in the way of true religion is the false ideas of the popular theology. It has overslaughed human life, has checked and drowned to death full many a handsome excellence, and gendered the most noisome weeds. So have I seen a little dainty meadow, full of fair, sweet grass, where New England's water-nymph, the Arethusa, came in June—fresh as the morning star, itself the day-star of a summer on high—yea, many a blessed little flower bloomed out. But a butcher and a leather-dresser built beside the stream which fed the nymph, dis-

gorging therein a flood of pestilence, and soon in place of Arethusa and her fair-faced sister flowers, huge weeds came up from the rank slime, and flaunted their vulgar, ugly dresses all the summer long, and went to seed peopling the spot with worse than barrenness!

Man has made great mistakes in his religious history. Worse than in aught beside. The enforced singleness of monk and nun, the polygamous conjunction of a master and his purchased beasts of luxury at Constantinople or Jerusalem, or at New Orleans, or at Washington; the brutish vice of ancient cities, which swallows down woman quick, into an actual pit worse than that fabled which took in the Hebrew heretics and their strange fire; the political tyranny of Asia Minor and Siberia; the drunken intemperance which reels in Boston and New York, companion of the wealth which loves the spectacle; all this is not a worse departure from the mutual love which should conjoin one woman and one man, from natural justice, from wholesome food and drink, than the theological idea of God is a departure from the actual God, whom you meet in Nature as the Cause and Providence of all the universe, and feel in your own heart as the Father and Mother of the soul! Let not this amaze you. The strongest boy goes most astray—furthest if not oftenest. It is little things man first learns how to use—a chip of stone before an axe of steel; how long he rides on asses before he learns to yoke fire and water, and command the lightning to convey his thought!

How much this religious faculty has run to waste—rending its banks, pouring over the dam, or turning the priest's loud clattering mill of vanity, not grinding corn for the toilsome, hungry world. Man sits on the bank, in mortars pounding his poor bread with many a groan, mourning over political oppression, the lies of great and the vanity of little men, over war and want, slavery, drunkenness, and many a vice, while the priest turns to private account this river of God, which is full of water! Will it always be so? Always! Once the streams of New England crept along their oozy beds, where only the water-lily lay in maiden loveliness, or leaped down rocks in wild majestic play. None looked thereon but the woods, which, shagged with moss, bent down and dipped

therein the venerable beard; or the moose, who came with pliant lip to woo the lilies when sunrise wakened those snow-clad daughters of the idle stream; or the bear, slaking her thirst in the clean water, or swimming with her young across; or the red man, who speared a salmon there and gave the river a poetic name. Look now: the woods have withdrawn, and only frame the handsome fields; the moose and the bear have given place to herds and flocks; the river is a mechanic—sawing, planing, boring, spinning, weaving, forging iron—more skilful than Tyrian Hiram, or Bezaleel and Aholiab, once called inspired, and clothes the people in more loveliness than Solomon, in all his glory, e'er put on; the red man, as idle as the stream which fed him, he is now three million civil-suited sons of New England, all nestled in their thousand towns, furnished with shop, and ship, and house, and church, and rich with works of thought.

It is the little streams we utilize at first. New England inherited the culture which a thousand generations slowly won; but it took her two hundred years to catch and tame the Merrimac, still serving its apprenticeship. It is chiefly the small selfishness of man we organize as yet, not the great overmastering powers; these wait for more experienced years. But the great river of religious emotion —the Danube, the Nile, the Ganges, the Mississippi, the Amazon of each human continent, which, fed from tallest heaven-touching hills, has so often torn up the yielding soil, and in its torrent dashed the ruins of one country on the next, in a deluge of persecution, crusade, war—one day, a peaceful stream, will flow by the farm and garden which it gently feeds, turn the mills of science, art, literature, trade, politics, law, morals; will pass by the cottage, the hamlet, the village, and the city, all full of peaceful men and women, industrious and wealthy, intelligent, moral, serving the Infinite God by keeping all His law. What an age will that be when the soul is minister not despot, and the church is of self-conscious humanity!

Do you want a teacher to do for you the noblest work that man can do for man; to tell you of the Infinite God, of the real man, not the fabulous, of the actual Divine Scriptures, of the live religion; to help waken it in you, and

organize it out of you; engineering for the great religious enterprises of mankind, and leading the way in all the progressive movements of the race? Then encourage this young man in his best efforts, rebuke all meanness, cowardice, dishonesty, affectation, sloth, all anger, all hate, all manner of unfaithfulness. Cheer and bless him for every good quality; honour his piety and morality; reverence all self-reliant integrity, all self-denying zeal. Bid him spend freely his costliest virtue, 'twill only greaten in the spending. If he have nothing to say, let him say it alone; make no mockery of hearkening where ears catch only wind, and the audience get cold; give him empty room. But if he have truth to tell, listen and live!

Do you want such a minister as superintendent of the highest husbandry, the culture of your soul? or a parasite, a flunkey, who will lie lies in your very face, giving you all of religion except feelings, ideas, and actions; a man always quoting and never living; making your meanness meaner after it is baptized and admitted to the church, and stuffed with what once to noble men were sacraments! Then I will tell you where to find such "by the quantity," at wholesale. I will show you the factories where they are turned out for the market. Nay, give me any pattern of minister which you require, I will lead you to the agent, who will copy it exactly, and from dead wood now stored away in churches laid up to dry, in three years furnish the article, made to order as readily as shoemakers' lasts, and by a similar process, "warranted sound in the faith"—if not in that "once delivered to the saints," at least in that now kept by the sinners! There are towns in Virginia which breed slaves for the plantations and the bagnios of the South; and also northern towns which breed slaves for the churches. God forgive us for taking his name in vain!

I know some men think the minister must be a little mean man, with a little mind, and a little conscience, and a little heart, and a little small soul, with a little effeminate culture got by drivelling over the words of some of humanity's noblest men; who never shows himself on the highway of letters, morals, science, business, politics, where thought, well girt for toil, marches forth to more than kingly victory; but now and then creeps round in the

parlours of society, and sneaks up and down the aisles of a meeting-house, and crawls into the pulpit, lifting up his cowardly and devirilized face, and then with the words and example of Moses, and Samuel, and David, and Esaias, and Jesus, and Paul before him, under his eye, in a small voice whines out his worthless stuff which does but belittle the exiguity of soul which appropriately sleeps before him in the pews, not beneath him in spirit, only below him in space. I know men who want such a minister, that will "preach the Gospel," and never apply the Christian religion to politics, to business, to society, to the life of the family or the individual, not even to the church! An admirable gospel for scribes, and pharisees, and hypocrites! Glad tidings of great joy is it to the hunkers and stealers of men: "Religion nothing to do with politics; the morality of Jesus not to be applied to the dealings of man; the golden rule too precious for daily use!" Such a man will "save souls"—preserved in hypocrisy and kept on ice from youth to age! How he can call his idolatry even worshipping the Bible I know not; for you cannot open this Book anywhere, but from between its oldest or its newest leaves there rustles forth the most earnest human speech, words which burn even now when they are two or three thousand years old!

How much a real minister of religion may do! He deals with the most concerning of all concerns, what touches the deepest wants of all men. How a man in such a calling can be idle, or indifferent, or dull to himself, I see not. The covetous man may be weary of money, a voluptuary sicken with pleasures, and one ambitious and greedy of praise get tired of new access of power, and loathe his own good name; but how a minister of religion can ever tire of toil to bless mankind, is past my finding out. How much a real teacher of absolute religion may bring to pass! Earth had never so palpable a need of a live minister with living religion in him, I care not whether you call it Christianity or no—but the feelings, the ideas, and the actions of such a religion as human nature demands! The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers—where are they?

No man has so admirable an opportunity as the minister to communicate his best thoughts to the public. The politician has his place in the Senate, and speaks twice or

thrice in a session, on the external interests of men, chiefly busying himself about measures of political economy, and seldom thinking it decorous or "statesmanlike" to appeal to principles of right, or address any faculty deeper than the understanding, or appeal to aught nobler than selfishness. The reformer, the philanthropist, finds it difficult to gather an audience; they come reluctantly, at rare intervals of business or pleasure. But every Sunday custom tolls the bell of time. In the ruts of ancient usage men ride to the meeting-house, seat them in venerable pews, while the holiest associations of time and place calm and pacify their spirit, else often careful and troubled about many things, and all are ready for the teacher of religion to address their deepest and their highest powers. Before him lies the Bible—an Old Testament, full of prophets and rich in psalm and history; a New Testament, crowded with apostles and martyrs, and in the midst thereof stands that great Hebrew peasant, lifting up such a magnificent and manly face. The very hymn the people sing is old and rich with holy memories; the pious breath of father, mother, sister, or perhaps some one more tenderly beloved, is immanent therein; and the tune itself comes like the soft wind of summer which hangs over a pond full of lilies, and then wafts their fragrance to all the little town. Once every week, nay, twice a Sunday, his self-gathered audience come to listen and to learn, expecting to be made ashamed of every meanness, vanity, and sin; asking for rebuke, and coveting to be lifted up towards the measure of a perfect man. It is of the loftiest themes he is to treat. Beside all this, the most tender confidence is reposed in him—the secrets of business, the joy of moral worth, the grief of wickedness, the privacy of man's and woman's love, and the heart's bitterness which else may no man know, often are made known to him. He joins the hands of maidens and lovers, teaching them how to marry each other; he watches over the little children, and in sickness and in sorrow is asked "to soothe, and heal, and bless." Prophets and apostles sought such avenues to men, for him they are already made. Surely if a man, in such a place, speaking Sunday by Sunday, year out, year in, makes no mark, he must be a fool!

There was never such an opportunity for a great man to

do a great constructive work in religion as here and now. How rich the people are!—in all needed things, I mean—and so not forced to starve their soul that life may flutter round the flesh: how intelligent they are! no nation comes near us in this. The ablest mind finds whole audiences tall enough to reach up and take his greatest, fairest thought. There is unbounded freedom in the North; no law forbids thought, or speech, or normal religious life. How well educated the women are! A man, with all the advantages of these times—rapidity of motion from place to place, means of publishing his thought in print and swiftly spreading it by newspapers throughout the land, freedom to speak and act, the development of the people, their quick intelligence to appreciate and apply a truth—has far more power to bless the world religiously than the Gospels ascribe to Jesus of Nazareth with all his miracles! What was walking on the water compared to riding in a railroad car; what "speaking with tongues" to printing your thought in a wide-spread newspaper; and what all other feigned miracles to the swift contact of mind with thoughtful mind!

Close behind us are Puritans and Pilgrims, who founded New England, fathers of all the North. They died so little while ago that, lay down your ear to the ground, you may almost fancy that you hear their parting prayer, "Oh, Father, bless the seed we planted with our tears and blood. And be the people thine!" Still in our bosom burns the fathers' fire. Through all our cities sweeps on the great river of religious emotion; thereof little streams also run among the hills, fed from the same heaven of piety; yea, into all our souls descends the sweet influence of nature, and instinctively we love and trust. All these invite the scientific mind and the mechanic hand of the minister to organize this vast and wasted force into institutions which shall secure the welfare of the world. Shall we use the waters of New England hills, and not also the religious instincts of New England men? What if a new Jesus were to appear in some American Nazareth, in some Massachusetts Galilee of the Gentiles, and bear the same relation to the consciousness of this age as the other Jesus to his times, what greater opportunities with no miracle would he now possess than if invested with that fabled power to re-

store the wanting limb, or to bring back the dead to life!

The good word of a live minister will probably be welcomed first by some choice maiden or matron, the evening star of that Heaven which is soon to blaze with masculine glory all night long. What individuals he may raise up! What schools he may establish, and educate therein a generation of holy ones! If noble, how he may stamp his feeling and his ideas on the action of the age, and long after death will reappear—a glorious resurrection this—in the intelligence, the literature, the philanthropy; in the temperance, and purity, and piety of the place! How many towns in America thus keep the soul of some good minister, some farmer or mechanic, lawyer or doctor—oftenest of all, of some good religious woman, long after her tomb has become undistinguishable in the common soil of graves? And how do we honour such?

"Past days, past men—but present still;
Men who could meet the hours,
And so bore fruit for every age,
And amaranthine flowers;—
Who proved that noble deeds are faith,
And living words are deeds,
And left us dreams beyond their dreams,
And higher hopes and needs."

All things betoken better times to come. There was never so grand an age as this—how swiftly moves mankind! But how much better we can do! Religious emotion once flowed into the gothic architecture of Europe, the fairest flower of human art—little blossoms of painting and sculpture, philosophy, eloquence, and poetry, all hidden, and yet kept within this great compound posy of man's history. The Catholic Church has her great composers in stone, artists in speech, and actors in marble; the Protestant its great composers in philosophy and literature, with their melody of thought, their harmony of ideas. One day there must be a church of mankind, whose composers of humanity shall think men and women into life, and build with living stones; their painting, their sculpture, their architecture, the manhood of the individual, the virtue of the family and community; their philosophy, their eloquence and song, the happiness of the nation, the peace and good will of all the world.

Oh, young man, gird your loins for this work; spare

not yourself but greatly spend. And you who ask his help —how much you all can do! The world waits for you! a truth of religion, it will burn its way into history, not as thunder, to destroy, but as sunlight, to create and bless. The human author may be buzzed about in the whisperings of bigots and self-misguided men; rooks may caw and owls may hoot at him; the rats of the state may gnaw at his deeds, and the church's mice nibble at his feelings; nay, he may stand on the scaffold, be nailed to a cross—a thief on either hand—and mocking words be writ against his name; or he may mix his last prayer with the snapping of fagots. Resistance is all in vain: his soul, in its chariot of fire, goes up to the calm still heaven of holy men, and his word of truth burns in to the consciousness of the world, and where he went, bare and bleeding, with painful feet, shall mankind march to triumph and great joy!

It is amazing how much a single man may do for good. The transient touch of genius fertilizes the recipient soul. So in early autumn, the farmer goes forth afield, followed by his beast, bearing a few sacks of corn, and dragging an inverted harrow adown the lane. All day long the farmer, the genius of the soil, scatters therein the seed, his horse harrowing the valleys after him; at night, he looks over the acres newly sown, the corn all smoothly covered in, puts up the bars behind him, speaks kindly words to his half-conscious fellow-labourer, "A good day's work well done, old friend!" and together they go home again, the beast with ears erect and quickened pace, as mindful of his well-deserved rack. For months the farmer sees it not again; but all the autumn long the seed is putting down its roots, and putting up its happy blade. All winter through it holds its own beneath the fostering snow. How green it is in spring! and while that genius of the soil has gone to other fields and pastures new, how the winds come and toss the growing wheat, and play at wave and billow in the green and fertile field! In the harvest time what a sea of golden grain has flowed from out that spring of seed he opened and let loose! So in the Christian mythology, Gabriel's transient salutation, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured amongst women," was in full time followed by a multitude of the heavenly host, singing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men!"

OF THE DELIGHTS OF PIETY.

A SERMON DELIVERED AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE YEARLY MEETING OF PROGRESSIVE FRIENDS, HELD AT LONGWOOD (NEAR KENNETT SQUARE), CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, ON SUNDAY, MAY 20, 1855.

My Friends:—This morning I ask your attention to SOME THOUGHTS ON THE DELIGHTS OF PIETY.

We are all connected with the world of matter, with the world of man, and with the world of God. In each of these spheres we have duties to do, rights to enjoy, which are consequent on the duties done. Our existence first, and next our welfare, depends on doing the duties and enjoying the rights. Thereof we may do much, and enjoy much, or do little and enjoy no more. The quantity of our threefold happiness will depend on the amount of duties done, and of the rights enjoyed; but the quality of the happiness is also largely within our control; and we may derive our habitual delight from any one of these three sources—the material, the human, and the divine; or we may draw from all of these. We may content ourselves with the lowest quality of human delights, or we may reach up and get the highest and dearest quality thereof.

Religion, in its wide sense, includes a man's relation to all three—to the world of matter, the world of man, and the world of God; it regulates a man's duties and rights, and consequent enjoyments, in all these three spheres of human consciousness—for religion, in the large sense of that word, is the service of God with every limb of the

body, with every faculty of the spirit, with every power we possess over matter or over man.

But there is a purely subjective and internal part of religion, which is the heart of the whole of it, and whence its streams of life are sent forth! I mean piety. At first, piety includes directly only man's relation to the world of God, and controls and regulates the duties thereof, the rights therein, and the enjoyment therefrom. But the roots of all other human relations, of all the rest of religion, strike down into this, and are not only steadied and supported, but they are nourished thereby. So all of religion, in its concretest form, comes ultimately out of this internal element which I call piety.

By piety, I mean the normal action of the strictly religious faculty—the soul—considered as purely internal and subjective. It is our consciousness of God, our feeling of the world of God, and of all which belongs thereto.

This piety is a feeling which, at first, seems to be simple, and not capable of being analyzed and decomposed into other elements. But when you look at the matter a moment, you see it must be attended by the idea of God, and, as a condition of complete and perfect piety, that idea must be the *true* idea—of God considered the Infinite Power, Infinite Wisdom, Infinite Justice, Infinite Holiness, and Infinite Love—for if you think, as many do, that God is not perfect, but is an ugly devil, it is plain that your feeling towards God, and your internal experience of God, must be exactly the opposite of what it will be if you consider Him as infinitely perfect in power, wisdom, justice, affection, and holiness. In the state of complete and perfect piety, the spirit of man embraces into one unity of consciousness several elements, namely, first, an idea of God, a conception of Him as Infinite; next, the feeling of perfect love for God, of perfect trust in Him, and of tranquillity and rest with God; and, as a third thing, the complete will to serve God by a way that corresponds to His nature, and to your nature likewise. Then, as a consequent result of these three things, there comes this—a supreme delight and rejoicing in God!

It seems to me that these things make up a complete and perfect piety, normal and total. So it includes a great thought—the idea of Infinite God; a great feeling—abso-

lute love and trust in God; and a great will—the resolution to serve Him by the means which He has provided. These things are separated by reflection, and may be analytically examined; for purposes of philosophy and understanding, it is necessary to do this; but for purposes of pure piety and religion it is not necessary; but we conceive of this as one simple thing not decomposable. This composite consciousness we call piety, and define it commonly by its chief and largest element which enters thereinto, the love of God—for the feeling of God implies the idea of Him as lovely, and leads unavoidably to the resolution to serve Him by the means that He has provided.

Now, this piety is distinguished from three abnormal forms of action of the religious faculty.

It is distinguished, first, from superstition; that is, the action of man's religious faculty combined with the false idea of God, namely, that He is not lovely and beautiful, but fearful and ugly. Accordingly the superstitious man thinks that God must be feared first of all; and the internal worship of God is accordingly, with that man, fear, and nothing but fear. Then he thinks that outwardly God must be served by some mode of action that is deformed and ugly, and violates the native instincts of man; that He must be served by mutilation, in old times, of the body, and, in our times, of the spirit—now of the intellect, then of the conscience, then of the affections, or of the religious faculty itself. This is a very common idea of God and a very common idea of religion. God is thought to be ugly, and religion of course is ugly! Superstition is fear before God, and when I speak of piety and its delights, I do not speak of superstition and any delight connected with that.

Then, next, piety is distinguished from fanaticism. That is the action of the religious faculty attended by the idea that God is not only fearful and ugly, but that he is malignant also, and hates certain men. Accordingly, the notion follows that God is to be served by cruelty to other men, by depriving them of rights which we value ourselves and do not wish to be deprived of. Fanaticism is hate before God, as superstition is fear before him. Fanaticism is a far greater evil than superstition, but in our

day it is far less common. Examples of fanaticism you find in the Spanish Catholics, who built the Inquisition, to persecute alike Catholic and Protestant, Mahometan and Jew; in the Protestants, who drove the fathers of New England and Pennsylvania from England and Holland to this the American wilderness; examples of it do you find in the Puritan fathers themselves, who persecuted Quakers and Baptists, and put them to death. Nay, Quakers themselves, though sinning less than other Christians, have yet sometimes been guilty of this offence.

This form of piety is, thirdly, distinguished from mysticism. Mysticism is the action of the religious element, attended by the idea that man is nothing, and that God designs to crush him down, not into non-resistance, but into mere passivity; that the religious action is all God asks for, and that is to be purely internal. So, according to the mystic, God is to be served not with all the faculties He has given, but only with this religious faculty, acting to produce emotions of reverence, trust, love, and the rest. Mysticism is sloth before God, as superstition is fear, and fanaticism is hate before God. It exists still in some of the churches, which cultivate only emotions of reverence, of trust, of love, and the like, but never let the love of God come out of the heart in the shape of the love of man.

In superstition and fanaticism there is not a great idea, but a mean and false one; not a great sentiment of love to God, but a mean one of fear before Him, and of hate towards men. But both of these do excite a great will, and accordingly superstitious men, and still more fanatical men, have always been distinguished for an immensity of will. In mysticism there may be a great idea and a great sentiment; there cannot be a great will. Complete and perfect piety unites all three,—the great thought—of the infinity of God; the great feeling—of absolute love for Him; and the great will—the resolution to serve Him.

I have thought it necessary at the outset to make this distinction between true piety and superstition, fanaticism, and mysticism, for two reasons. First, the religious faculties in action are as liable to mistake and error as the hand or the foot, or any faculty that we possess; and we should therefore guard against mistakes which have al-

ready been made, and into which ourselves are liable to fall. Then, secondly, I make this distinction and dwell upon it because each of these three things is often set up as piety itself, and a man is told he can have no real piety in one church without superstition; in another without fanaticism; and in a third, without mysticism.

Now real piety is the safeguard of all other forms of happiness; it is the greatest of human joys. Our delight in the world of God far transcends all our delight in the world of matter or in the world of man. If I am sure of God, sure of His infinite power, wisdom, justice, love, and holiness, then I am sure of everything else. I know that He has planned all things wisely, and will finally bring out all things well. Then I have a foundation on which I can build other things, and build securely. Then the universe—the world of matter and the world of man—looks permanent; I can rely on it. But without this certainty of God, I am not sure of anything; uncertainty hedges me in on every side. Now I doubt, then I fear, next I despair; for if all things depend on chance, as the atheist says—the blind action of blind forces—then there is no security that anything is planned wisely or will turn out well; and if they depend on an imperfect God, changeable, wilful, capricious, as the popular theology teaches, then there is the same lack of certainty, and I am not sure that God planned wisely or provides well. If they depend on an ugly and malignant God, as so many persons still teach, and some believe,—why, there is no hope; there is fear—yes, despair! In my nature there is a great demand for happiness, for immortality, for heaven. Logically, according to the light of nature, that demand, which comes of my constitution, implies the promise to pay; but if I am not sure of God, then I have only the promise to pay in my nature, but there is no endorser on the note; there is no security lodged as collateral for payment, and I cannot trust the promissor. This misfortune is a very deep one, and it is felt also in all the popular churches that are about us.

Thus my consciousness of God colours all the other facts of consciousness; my world of matter and my world of man take their complexion from my world of God. This

is not theory alone, it is plain fact; you see examples of it everywhere. My consciousness of God comes into every relation that I have in life—to my business, to my pleasure, to my affection. Go into rigid Calvinistic churches; look at the faces of men, listen to their prayers, read their hymns, see what passages are selected from the Bible; then go with these men to their homes, and see how their children are brought up in fear, in trembling, and with dread of God,—counting religion as something unnatural, —and see how a mistake in the idea of God comes out and colours all the man's life. Then to go to the opposite extreme, take the atheistic party which has risen up in our times, read their books, and see them declare that the idea of immortality is the greatest curse left for mankind, —not the common idea, but any idea of immortality,— hear them proclaim that the great function of the philosopher is to re-establish the flesh in its domineering over the spirit of man, and you see how their absence of the idea of God colours their consciousness and penetrates into every relation.

But if I know the infinite God, then I know that He is perfect cause and perfect providence, and that He makes and administers the world of matter from perfect motives, of perfect material, for a perfect purpose, and as a perfect means thereto, and that the perfect motive is love, the desire to bless everything that he makes; then I am sure that the end is foreseen and provided for, that all the action of the universe, whether right or wrong, of the great universe as a whole, and of you and me, the little atoms which compose it, of each nation, community, family, and individual—I am sure that all this has been foreseen and provided for, and so administered by the Infinite God that there shall be no absolute evil befalling the greatest genius or the humblest idiot; that no mote which peoples the sun's beams, that no mortal man, whether he be Judas the betrayer or Jesus the crucified, shall fail of never-ending bliss at last. Discipline there is, and must be, but only as means to the noblest and most joyous end. This I say I am sure of, for it follows logically from the very idea of the infinite perfect God. Nay, the religious instinct anticipates induction, and declares this with the spontaneous womanly logic of human nature itself.

Now to any man who thinks, this is a matter of the very utmost importance; to one who does not think, it is of no consequence at all. But if a man thinks, earnest and deep, this conclusion is the most vital. When I am satisfied on this point, then I can enjoy the world of matter and the world of man, and I can apply the human means which are in my power to the human end which I wish to bring to pass. I have then no doubt of the final result, no fear of that; I am concerned about to-day and to-morrow, about my doing my duty and my brother doing his; I am not at all concerned about eternity, and about God doing God's duty.

I confess I wonder that every man who lives does not have this confidence and enjoy it; it seems so natural, and is so instinctive also, and it squares so completely with the very highest science which man attains to; and then as you think about it, why, the infinite perfection of God springs into your eye at once,—so that I wonder that any man who thinks at all does not come to this conclusion, that God is infinitely perfect, perfect Cause and perfect Providence, and made all and superintends all from a perfect motive, for a perfect purpose, and as a perfect means, and will ultimately bless everything that He has created. And yet, natural as this is, instinctively as we get at it, philosophical as it certainly is, there is no sect of Christians or un-Christians which has laid this down as its great corner-stone. There is not, as I have said before, a single sect of men in this whole globe of land which declares consistently the infinite perfection of God; even the Unitarians, in their "creed" recently promulgated, though they say they believe the absolute perfection of God, yet do not understand what it means, and do not venture to say that no man shall be everlastingly damned; they wish it may be so, they dare not think it surely is so. That of course implies that they wish what God is not good enough to wish; and of course implies that they are better in their wishes than God in His wishes, and accordingly, that they are nearer to infinite perfection than God himself. And yet the Unitarians have less of this than any other sect in Christendom. You go into any other church,—I will except in a large measure the Universalist

church,—and you are frightened with the ghastly image of God which is gibbeted before you in horror.

But, in addition to this sense of permanent security, the piety I speak of furnishes the highest, the deepest, and the most intimate delight which mortal man knows or can know here on the earth. I am very far from denying the value of other forms of delight, even of those which come wholly from the world of matter. Every sense has its function, and that function is attended with pleasure, with joy. All these natural and normal delights ought to be enjoyed by every man; it is a sullenness toward God not to rejoice and thus appreciate his beautiful world when we can. St Bernard walked all day, six or seven hundred years ago, by the shores of the Lake of Geneva, with one of the most glorious prospects in the whole world before him—mountain, lake, river, clouds, gardens, everything to bless the eye—and that monk never saw a thing all day long. He was thinking about the Trinity, and when he reached home some one spoke to him of the beauty he must have seen; and the austere, sour-hearted monk said he had seen nothing. He thought it was a merit, and his chroniclers record it in his praise. It always seemed to me rather impious in the stout-hearted man, a proud fling at God, which Voltaire would have been ashamed of. Mr Beecher, with more wholesome piety, says in his poetic way, "The sweet-brier is country cousin to the rose." There is a touch of religious recognition in all his love of nature, which to me seems more truly pious than the proud flights and profound thoughts in the seven hundred and forty-four letters of St Bernard, and all his sharp and acute, and rather glorious sermons too. To me it always seemed irreverent in that great man that he boasted that he only eat his dinner, but never tasted it, as if his mouth were a mill and no more; it was certainly a fling at the good God, though the saint meant it otherwise. That great soul which made an ox's crib at Bethlehem holy ground, and the central point of many a pilgrimage, never flouted at God's world in that sort. He saw a lesson in the flight of the raven; in the savourless salt there was a sermon; there is a beatitude in the dry grass of the baking-kettle of a poor woman in the company going up

to Jerusalem to hear him preach; and the great eyes which saw God so clearly dwelt with pleasure on the lilies of the valley, and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not."

God made the world of matter exceeding beautiful, and meant it should be rejoiced in by these senses of ours: at these five doors what a world of loveliness comes in and brushes against the sides with its garment, and leaves the sign of God's presence on our doorposts and lintels. Think you God made the world so fair, every flower a sister to a star, and did not mean men's eyes to see, and men's hearts to take a sacrament thereat? Our daily bread is a delight which begins in babyhood, and only ends when the Infinite Mother folds us to her arms and gives us the bread which does not perish in the using. The humblest senses have their pleasure. The fly feeding on a berry crushed by accident on a bush, lets one a good way into the mystery of God's providence. The sights in nature, the sounds thereof,—they are all means of delight. I am sometimes astonished to see how full of happiness a single day may be made, and that at the very cheapest rate, by the sights which come to the eye, and the sounds to the ear, at no cost but opening and listening. These are sacraments by which man communes with God. It is surely churlish to turn away from the table which He spreads before every man. It is a painful sight and a sad thought to remember how many men there are in this Christian land of ours, and still more in others, who are debarred from this pleasure. We think it a sad thing, and surely it is, that every man should not have a Bible in his house, and power to read it; and great-hearted Christians make large sacrifices to put the words of Esaias, and Amos, and Paul, and Jesus into the hands of every man. But should we not also be ashamed that the greater, diviner Scriptures of God are not in every Christian's understanding, before his eye, and in his consciousness! That also is a reproach.

Then come those higher delights from the use of the senses and the mind better cultivated; from the beauty of nature and art, and common life. I cannot now dwell at length on our delight in the world of men, only recall to

your memory what every man experiences,—the joy of affection, of love in all its forms, connubial, parental, filial, related, friendly, and all that. It seems to me that ascetic preachers often undervalue this. And I remember to have heard a man, of a good deal of power too, declare that a man's love for his garden, his house, his ox, his horse, his wife, and his children, was all nonsense, and absurdity; nay, "a sin" in the eyes of God, and just as he loved these things the more, he loved God the less; and if he loved Him supremely, he would care for nothing but God! I do not value at a low rate the happiness which comes from the union of the world of matter with the world of man, from our industry, its process and its results. I wish every earnest man knew what satisfaction there is in putting your human nature upon material nature, and making it take your image—now a form of use, then a form of beauty. I do not think we make account enough of this, or set sufficient store by this source of delight. To put human nature upon material nature, in the shape of a grand statue or a grand picture—everybody thinks that is a great delight; but so it is to put human nature upon material nature in the form of a shoe, or a shirt, or a carriage, or a house, or a stocking, or a loaf of bread, or a nail, a farm, a garden, or a steam engine, or anything you will; there is the same triumph of mind over matter in the one case as in the other, and when we get a little wiser we shall see what a real joy is in this, and at one end of society there will be no idleness and shirking, and at the other no drudgery and being crushed by excess of toil. God made man to live with matter, and made them both so that there should be good neighbourhood between the two, and man should get delight from the contact. God made men so that they might live with each other, and get deeper, dearer, and truer delight from that intimacy. Do not think, I say, that I undervalue either of these forms of well-being. Let a man have all that he can get of both, and communicate in both kinds through this sacrament, with thankfulness of heart. But I must say that I think the delight which comes from the world of God, the joys of piety as a normal consciousness and experience of God, a great way surpass all these other delights I have just named. Yes, compared with the others, this

is what womanhood is compared with girlhood or babyhood. I say this from my own experience; but it is not my experience alone,—every deep-hearted saint who rejoiced in the world of matter and the world of man, and then took fast hold on the world of God, tells us the same thing. What brave words have come to us from Jesus of Nazareth, from Paul of Tarsus, from Thomas à Kempis, and William Law, and Isaac Watts, and that great stout-hearted man whose foot was so deep in the world of matter, whose hands went so largely into the world of men, and whose soul took hold so strongly on the world of God —Martin Luther: what brave words these have left us of their experience in the world of God. Nay, how full of the deepest and richest experience of this kind were the lives of the saints of the Quaker church! What joy had Fox, and Nayler, and Penn, and Woolman, and Scott, and all those pious souls—women and men, who learned to lie low in the hand of God, and rejoice in their consciousness of Him and the visitations of the Eternal Love!

What exquisite delights they are which make up our experience and enjoyment of God. The aspect of beauty, in every form, is always a joy—in the shape and colour of a blade of grass, a nut, a fly's wing, a pearl found in a mussel of a New Hampshire brook. What higher delight is there in the beauty of the human form! Beauty is made up of these four things—completeness as a whole, perfection of the parts, fitness of each part for its function, and correspondence with the faculties of man. These four things make up the statics and dynamics of beauty. Now, looked at with the intellectual and æsthetic part of human consciousness, God is absolute beauty. He is the beauty of being, self-existence; the beauty of power, almightiness; of intellect, all-knowingness; of conscience, all-righteousness; of affection, all-lovingness; of the soul, all-holiness; in a word, He is the absolute, the altogether beautiful. As men take delight in mere sensuous loveliness of beautiful things, a rose, a lily, a dewdrop, a sunset, a statue or a star, or man's or woman's handsome face, all heedless of their use; so a contemplative man may take rapturous joy in the absolute beauty of God—infinitely attractive to every spiritual faculty of man—having that fourfold loveli-

ness, completeness as a whole, perfection of parts, fitness of function, and adaptation to our human nature.

But this beauty of God is a source of delight to few men; it cannot be relished without a great development of the religious faculty, and also a profound culture of the intellectual and æsthetic faculties; and besides, is somewhat too abstruse and transcendental in its nature for the busy world of men, who want something they can grasp with a thicker and hotter hand. I mention it, and dwell upon it, because it lies so much out of the way of common preaching, and because also it is real and lies within the reach of every man who can cultivate his understanding and his religious faculty. But I pass briefly over this, because to many men it seems as moonshine when compared with the clear daylight of other forms of religious joy.

Then there is this feeling of security and trust in God. I feel God not as a King, power alone, but as a Father; yea, as a Mother; and I know that God loves me with tenderest affection, that He loves every human soul with all of His infinite power, wisdom, justice, love, and holiness. Now it is a delight to be beloved by any one; the affection which a cat, or dog, or horse, or ox feels for a man is a delight to that man; to know that some human being holds you in esteem, in affection, watches for you and watches over you, and takes delight in your well-being—why, what a joy that is! Everybody knows it. I speak not now of the active affection which loves back again, but of the passivity of spirit which only joys in being loved by other men. Yet in receiving such love from mortal man there is often this hindrance—the man often wishes it to be exclusive to him alone; for he thinks his friend has so little affection that he wants it all, and would break other men's pitchers which are let down to the finite, private well of his friend's affection; so there is a strife between the herdsmen of Abraham and of Lot, a quarrel which troubles the well, and breaks the pitchers, and muddies the water itself. But as the affection of the Infinite God is boundless, not to be exhausted, as from the very nature of God He must have infinite love, so no man need be jealous of Him and fearful we shall not get our share, because publicans and sinners enter into the joy of their

Lord. When the elder brother comes near the house of the Infinite God, he hears the music and dancing, and is not wroth, but falls on his brother's neck and kisses him, and finds himself in the finding of the lost, and lives anew in the living of the dead.

I know the delight of being loved, for I have summed myself in the affection of father and mother, and brother and sister, and wife and relative; and if anybody knows the beauty and blessedness of friendship, I think that I do, for I have sounded its depths and tasted its joy. But the love that I have received from mortal men, from father and mother, wife, and relative, and friend—it is but little, nay, it is nothing, compared to the still and calm delight which I feel from consciousness of being loved by the Infinite God. My mortal friends love me, perhaps, through their weakness; they are not good enough to love a better man; God loves me for His strength, for His infinity. They are exclusive, perhaps loving others the less from loving me the more; but God includes all, the heathen, the Hebrew, the Mahometan, the atheist, and the Christian; nay, Cain, Iscariot, the kidnapper, are all folded in the arms of the Infinite Mother, who will not suffer absolute evil to come to the least or the worst of these, but so tempers the mechanism of humanity that all shall come to the table of blessedness at last! Death itself is no limit. God's love is eternal also, providing retribution for all I do; but pain is medicine. What is not delight is discipline, the avenue to nobler joy.

Feeling a consciousness of this Divine love for me, knowing that it is joined with infinite power, wisdom, justice, and holiness, that it is perfect Cause to plan and perfect Providence to administer—why, all the sorrows and sufferings of life, how easily they are borne! I writhe in mortal agony, but my Father's arms are round me—the agony is still. I am not recognized by the world, my little merit is not acknowledged, not appreciated, it is so small; but God recognizes and appreciates it, and smiles down on the little good I do, and it is not lost. Nobody feels for me or with me; but the great God sympathizes with me. I have His infinite power and His infinite love heeding me every moment. I am tormented by the loss of friends—father, mother, wife, child; my dearest of the

nearest are gone; but the Infinite Mother folds me to her bosom, and her tenderness wipes the tears from my eyes; I fall asleep in the Infinite arms, remembering that no harm has happened to those who are taken, and there is a place in store for the one that is left. I know that no evils are absolute and lasting; nay, before the creation of the world, all the errors, the mistakes, and the sins which you, or I, or the human race, would commit, were foreseen by the Infinite Father, were provided for long before they came to pass, and shall, all of them, be rounded off at last into a whole of infinite bliss, infinite love towards each child that He has created, towards Cain, towards Iscariot, the kidnapper, and the victims of a world of cruelty and wrong.

I can look on the world's suffering and sorrow, on the wars and slavery, the poverty, drunkenness, and crime, the dreadful want which pines in cities, the vice we pile up in jails to perish in malignant rot, the more vicious vice which builds those jails; I can look on all the sad heart-break of mankind, and I know it will be all overruled by the Creator in His machinery of the world so that infinite good shall come at last. Of all the world's suffering and transgression, none came by superhuman chance, and so is a world accident; none by superhuman malignity, and is a world curse. The history of man is the calculated consequence of the faculties God put in man, known beforehand to the Infinite Cause, provided by the Infinite Providence, and made to serve His purpose of eternal love.

Then there comes the rising up of all my spirit in one great act of gratitude, reverence, and trust, one great feeling of love to God, and this fills me with unbounded delight. Passive to receive God's love, I am active to return it with love again. I just now spoke of the delight of being loved by mortal men! and then of the intimate joy of conscious love received from God! But as our highest joy is of action, and not merely of receiving, as it is more blessed to give affection than to receive even that, so the joy which a man feels from his conscious love of the Infinite God far surpasses even the delight which he has from being loved by the Father.

My affection for my earthly friends is checked by the

limitations of their character: thus far and no farther is the rule:

"For the fondest, the fairest, the truest that met,
Man still found the need to forgive and forget."

But as God is infinitely perfect, absolutely loveable, so there is no limit without to my power of loving Him, and my affection grows with the love of God which it feeds upon, and becomes greater, wider, deeper, nicer in its refinement, and brings a greater and greater accession of delight.

Then I have in God the sense of security, of permanent welfare which it brings; this imparts a steadiness to the action of all the faculties; it gives energy, vigour, quickness to the intellect, strengthens the will, sharpens the conscience, widens the heart, blesses with its own beatitude every faculty that I possess. My delight in God increases each special joy in the things of matter or in the persons of men; I love the world the more, because I know it is God's world, even as a dry leaf given by a lover is dearer than all pearls from whose loves us not! I love my proper business better, by fire-side and street-side, in market and in shop, because I know that it is the way of serving God, bringing about His divine end by my human means. I love my brothers and sisters, my father and mother, wife and child, far more, because my heart is filled with reverence and love to God.

In the sunshine of life, every human joy is made more joyous by this delight in God. When these fail, when health is gone, when my eye is dim, when my estate slips through my hands, and my good name becomes a dishonour, when death takes the nearest and dearest of my friends, then my consciousness of God comes out, a great light in my darkness, and a very present help in my time of trouble. In wet weather in the spring, every hill abounds with water, the brooks run over in their affluence, and all the hill-sides and plains are green: but, when week after week there is no dew nor rain, and month after month the heavens impart no germinative moisture to the ground, the little streams dry up, the surface springs are choked with heat and dust, then we go to the well, that is

bored into the primeval rock, embosomed in the mountain, and drink cool sweet water that never fails.

This delight is for you and me, and every one of us; and when we have this pure abstract enjoyment, which comes of piety in our soul, then the love of God will run over into morality, into love of men in every form! and, in addition to these dear delights of piety, we shall have the joys of philanthropy, of justice, of wisdom, and of all human consciousness in its thousand forms!

A DISCOURSE OF THE RELATION BETWEEN THE ECCLESIASTICAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.[1]

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE PROGRESSIVE FRIENDS' MEETING-HOUSE, AT LONGWOOD, CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, MAY 10, 1855.

RELIGION is one of the most important of the concerns of man. It comes from the deepest and most powerful of all our spiritual faculties. More than any one element of consciousness it helps mould the character of the individual and the nation. The ideas we form of God, of man, of the relation between them, of the mode of learning our religious duty, and of our final condition in the future world —these affect all the concerns of the nation. For they found institutions which shape the politics, the business, and the literature of the people, so ultimately determining their condition for weal and woe. The theology of Spain is one of the prime causes of her ruin; American slavery not only has one of its roots in the selfishness of the planter and the politician, but also another under the meeting-house, where it is watered by the eaves-droppings of the popular theology. At the opening of a new place for religious meetings, which is already consecrated thereunto by your presence and the prayer of your heart, I ask your attention to SOME THOUGHTS ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THE

[1] Some of the thoughts of this discourse may be found elaborated more fully in a volume of "Sermons of Theism, Atheism, and the Popular Theology." Boston, 1853, vol. i. 12mo.

THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

In the historical progress of many thousand years, out of material nature man has developed all the visible property of the ten hundred million inhabitants of earth. Thence come the pastures, farms, and gardens; the houses, markets, temples, roads of earth, wood, stone, or iron; the towns and cities, the forts and fleets; all the tools of industry or destruction; the instruments for use; the ornaments for beauty. All these are of human creation—thoughts organized in things. Man's mind is their father; the world of matter is the mother thereof. God made us spirit: He gives us matter, and thence have we made all these things which constitute the world of art.

This world of art, thought organized in matter, contains at present two parts: First, What we inherit—our traditional part; and second, What we create—our original part. The traditional requires to be looked over anew. Some of it is of present value and will last longer, perhaps for ever; some of it is no more fit for present use, but must be left to perish, the new and better taking its place. When Xerxes invaded Europe draw-bows were his best weapons of attack, his arrows darkened the air of Thermopylæ; now the allied armies at Sebastopol have not a bow-string in all their scientific camp. Once a hatchet of stone was mankind's best tool for creative industry; now axes of steel have driven the tomahawk out of all markets.

All this world of art shares the progress of man; becomes greater in quantity, nicer in quality. It is amenable to perpetual improvement; is revised continually, the good kept, the useless left to perish. Time winnows all harvests with rugged breath—great clouds of chaff go flying all abroad, while the useful grain is thankfully gathered up. The highway of history is marked by works abandoned, tools that have served out their time, superseded, disbanded, left alone.

This all men agree to. None refuses bread because his fathers once fed on acorns and beech-nuts; no woman disdains to ride well-clad in a railroad car, because her mothers only walked, and that barefoot and naked. And what an odds between the savage's world of art and yours

to-day; between this "Indian country" of 1555, and the Pennsylvania of 1855! All this difference comes from the civilized thought mixed with the savage world of matter. The advance is progression by experiment—wherein many attempts fail. Of all the inventions recorded in the Patent Office, how few are adopted into permanent use!—the rest are winnowed off as chaff. But without the straw there could have been no corn.

In his historic progress, out of human nature man developes feelings, thoughts, and actions, and thence forms institutions, arts, languages, laws, sciences, states, societies, and the like. All these together make up the world of institutions. A machine is a contrivance of thought organized in matter; an institution a contrivance of thought organized in man. Of each there are many forms.

All the feelings, all the thoughts, all the actions, with all the manifold institutions of these thousand million men now on earth, have grown out of human nature, and correspond to the degree of man's progressive culture thereof; just as all the vegetation of the earth has grown out of its soil, and represents its climate, the richness of the ground, and the advance of the season, all varying continually. Since the world was created all vegetation has been domestic development, not foreign importation: not a camomile flower, not an apple-seed has been brought in from abroad—or could have been. These institutions have come partly from the instincts of men—acting blindly, not knowing whither they went; partly also from deliberate affection and conscious will—men setting a purpose and then devising means for that end. But all these institutions are of human origin, as much so as the machines—the family and the state not less than the axe of stone or iron, the farm or the railroad.

In our world of institutions there are also two parts—the inherited, and the newly created. Each partakes of the character of the age whence it came. The traditional must be revised; some of it is good for the present—nay, for all time; some must be left to perish. The original will be winnowed in the same way by such as come after us. Once the polygamous family of the savage, with his captive wives whom force subordinated to him but no mutual love conjoined, was the best domestic institution of

mankind. A military despotism was once the best tool man had devised for political work. Where are such things now? Human history is marked by the institutions cast off and left behind. What once is borne as the banner in front of humanity, the symbol of its purpose and the gathering point of its heroes, is one day thrown down in the dust as a worthless rag, and trodden by the rear-guard, nay, by the very stragglers of mankind. How many "settled opinions" of philosophers have perished; how much "immortal literature" has gone to the ground; while laws of Medes and Persians have been repealed by the supreme court of time, and become obsolete and forgotten by humanity. You may trace man's path through time as space by what he abandons. Ancient arrows and pestles are turned up by the farmer's plough, ancient policies and philosophies by the spade of the scholar—forms of the family or of the state successively built up out of human nature and successively crumbling down. In two thousand years the most progressive portion of the Anglo-Saxon tribe has left behind it absolute monarchy, limited monarchy, and aristocracy. In thirty or forty thousand years how much has the human race passed by! All these institutions, like the machines of the world of art, are amenable to perpetual improvement, subject to continual revision in the progressive development of mankind. You and I are not ashamed of a democracy because our fathers once swore allegiance to William the Conqueror, or patiently bore the yoke of Henry VIII.

What a difference between the savage's world of institutions and that of the civilized man; between this "Indian country" of 1555, and the Pennsylvania of to-day, with your world of institutions, art, sciences, literature—domestic, social, and political customs. But all of this comes out of human nature—one attempt made after the other, many failing. Here also the advance is through progression by experiment. Look over the seventy volumes of statutes of the British Realm—through the history of medicine or machinery—see how much has become worthless, obsolete, and worn-out: laws lying there like spent bullets flattened out and rusted through; engines exploded long ago; medicines which humanity

no longer swallows down; these are the potsherds and arrow-heads which mark the track of mankind. Half the weeds of our fields were brought here as herbs indispensable to man.

In an institution the chief thing to look at is the idea it represents—the primordial thought; for that is the human mould in which the human substance of the institution is cast, and as the sheep are filled "according to their pasture," so the institution is like the idea which controls its shape. In thought you melt away all the matter of the solar system, conceiving of the sun and planets as mere mathematic points of force, and by this abstraction you can easier understand the mechanism of the heavens. In like manner, from institutions you may dissolve away the men who form them or are formed thereby, and consider only the ideas they represent, and by this abstraction the easier and better understand the mechanism of humanity.

In all nations above the mere naked wild man, you find sentiments, ideas, and actions, which have come from the religious element in human nature. Let the word religion stand here for the service and worship which man pays to his conception of God, whatever that may be. Theology is the science of religion. The intellect, reflecting on facts of religious consciousness, or on observations thereof in others, produces theology, just as it produces science from facts of consciousness and from facts of observation in the material world. The ideas which men form on what pertains to religion get organized into peculiar forms. Let me call them Ecclesiastical Institutions. They are different in the various nations, and vary in the same nation with its condition and culture. For, as the products of vegetation are not the same in any two zones, or countries, but follow the geographical peculiarities of climate, position, soil, and the like, so the Ecclesiastical Institutions—a product of the religious element—in form and substance depend upon the ethnographic peculiarities of the race, the tribe, and nation, and vary with the degree of civilization and general culture. So the theological ideas of various nations, with the Ecclesiastical Institutions thence arising, differ as much as the Faunas and Floras of various countries.

These Ecclesiastical Institutions, including therein all the emotions, ideas, and actions they embody, are of human origin. They are the contrivances which man makes for his purpose, his machinery of religion; the substance and the form are alike human. But as the object of religious reverence is Divine, not human, so it comes to be alleged that these institutions came down straightway from God. Astronomy deals with the stars, and navigation with the deep: shall it then be said that Newton's Principia and Blunt's Coast Pilot came miraculous, the one from the heavens and the other from the sea? It were not more absurd. It does not appear that any foreign element of thought has been added to man's consciousness since the first creation. There is perpetual development from within, no importation from another sphere. As the world of material nature was fashioned as a perfect means for a perfect purpose, so the world of human nature is equally adequate for its Creator's design, neither getting nor needing additions from any foreign source. All that is in human consciousness originated there—from man's contact with his surroundings, and from himself.

There is one great idea common to all Ecclesiastical Institutions: the idea of God, the Divine above the human. All nations, above the wild man, agree in this point—There is a God; but differ in the character and conduct they ascribe to him. They agree as to his being, and differ as to his being this or that. For, as the plants of Nova Zembla differ from those of Sumatra, not less do the theological ideas of the savage differ from those of the civilized and enlightened. There are zones of religious as of material vegetation, arctic and tropical.

In Ecclesiastical Institutions there is something which is general, human, and belongs to all forms of religion coming from nations in that stage of development; and also something else peculiar to the particular people. So all men agree in what makes them men, but differ in what makes one John and the other James. In the last four or five thousand years there have been seven great forms of religion, or Ecclesiastical Institutions, in the world,—the Vedantic, Old Indian of South Asia; the Hebrew; the

Classic, Greek and Roman; the Zoroastrian; the Buddhistic; the Christian; and the Mahometan;—which have had a wide and deep influence on the welfare of mankind. They all have some things in common, while in others they widely differ.

The religious element—call it the soul—begins its activity with emotions—mere feelings; these lead to thoughts, and they to actions; and thus, little by little, Ecclesiastical Institutions get formed, the human instrument or machinery for expressing the idea, embodying the action, and thus attaining the object of the religious emotion. These institutions, like all others, are of gradual formation. Their influence, for good or ill, depends on the character of the idea embodied therein, and on their fitness for the special nation who accepts it. It is machinery in the human mill. When an Ecclesiastical Institution is fixed, and incapable of progressive amendment to suit the advancing consciousness of the people, it is a curse; and the nation which continually submits to it is first hindered and finally destroyed thereby. But while nations perish, mankind still survives; as the ocean endures for ever, while wave after wave rises successive and successive falls. If Spain be spiritually dead—the once noble tree killed by clipping its limbs, and girdling its trunk, and boring into its root—other trees spring out of the procreant earth and grow to mighty columns of green beauty. A living and progressive nation is continually altering its Ecclesiastic Institutions, as it improves its other machinery, industrial or political. Thus three thousand years ago the Ecclesiastic Institutions of the Teutonic people represented the old pagan ideas of Divinity, and suited the worship of Thor, Odin, or Hertha; the Teutons outgrew this form of religion, and accepted the Roman Christian ideas, with the Roman Christian institutions; these were at length passed by, and now most of the Teutons have accepted the German Christian ideas with the corresponding institutions, and are preparing for another progressive step.

Now in our present Ecclesiastical Institutions there is an inherited and a newly-created part; the old must be revised, for while it contains what is true, and, therefore, permanently good and fair, it has also things good for once but not good for ever, and others not good at all.

What fits must be kept, the rest cast off. For the Ecclesiastical Institutions, like all other human contrivances, are amenable to perpetual improvement, and must be made to represent the total development of the nation which accepts and retains them.

There are now three great Ecclesiastical Institutions which occupy the civilized and half-civilized parts of the world, the Buddhistic, the Christian, the Mahometan. These represent the three great world-sects into which the foremost nations are now divided. The Christian is made up of Hebrew, Zoroastrian, and classic elements; it contains also some things derived from Jesus of Nazareth, and many more from Paul of Tarsus, who systematized what Jesus begun; and yet others, added from various sources since his time.

There are two things which pass under the name of "Christianity." One is natural piety and morality—the love of God and the keeping of His commandments; I will here call this the CHRISTIAN RELIGION. The other is a scheme of theological doctrines and opinions which from time to time have accumulated, and are now brought down to us with numerous ecclesiastical ceremonies; I will call this the CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, though in many important matters it differs widely from the recorded doctrines and opinions of Jesus himself.

It is this theology which shapes the Ecclesiastical Institutions of Christendom; it is the idea whereof they are the embodiment, the substance to which they are the form. When priests and ministers speak of "Christianity" they commonly mean the "Christian theology," not the "Christian religion." Men who believe this theology and comply with its circumjacent ceremonies are called "Christians;" not such as have merely the "Christian religion," who are called only "amiable men," "deists," "infidels," and the like. To be "converted" is to accept this theology with its ceremonies. When it is said, "Christianity frees the slave, elevates woman, humanizes man, saves the soul," the meaning is that this is done by the Christian theology.

Now to understand the good and ill of these institutions, their relation to the religious consciousness of the American people, and their consequent influence on our present con-

dition and future development, let us look at some of the chief ideas therein—that is, at some of the great theological doctrines of Christendom itself. To do this I will treat of Christendom as a whole, looking only at the great bulk of Christians, and neglecting certain small and exceptional bodies who reject more or less of those ideas, and whose power is only infinitesimal. For I do not care to inquire after the fate of each single bucketful of water ladled out to moisten a lady's rose-bush, but to learn the general direction and current of the great stream of influence which comes from these institutions.

Dissolving away all accidental matter, I will look only at some substantive ideas which are qualitatively common to all Christendom after making the exceptions above referred to. I omit also many excellent doctrines which the Christian has in common with the other world-sects, and some peculiar to itself, and ask your attention to the five great false ideas of this theology which are embodied in the Ecclesiastical Institutions of Christendom.

I. Of the false idea of God.—The ecclesiastical idea of God represents him as deficient in all the great essentials of Deity except eternal self-existence. He is imperfect in power, in wisdom, in justice, in benevolence, and in holiness—fidelity to Himself.

1. Imperfect in power.—He cannot accomplish His purpose; the devil, His perpetual enemy, routs Him in every great battle, and at last will fill an immense hell with the damned, the pick and flower of all the world, who stream thither in vast crowds, overflowing the broad way to destruction, while the narrow road which leads the elect to salvation is thinly dotted "with here and there a traveller."

2. Imperfect in wisdom.—He does not know how His own contrivance will work until set a-going; and then its wheels do not run in human history as in the divine head. Thus the "Fall" of Adam is as much a surprise to God as to man; only the serpent understood it beforehand. The wickedness of the human race, both before and after the "flood," is an astonishment to God, who repented that He had made man, the work proving so defective and even pernicious. God learns by experiments, whereof many turn out failures; so He must destroy His work and try

again, not always succeeding the second or third time—nor even in the end.

3. Imperfect in justice.—He often violates the moral sense which He has put into human nature, is deceitful and intensely cruel: witness the command to Abraham for sacrificing Isaac, to Moses to butcher the Canaanites; witness the triumph of the "Lamb" in the book of Revelation, with his oriental army of two hundred million cavalry, destroying a third part of the human race in one quarter of the world, and the rest of his military servants in the western quarter, in one campaign making a spot of blood on the ground two hundred miles in its shortest diameter and thirty-six inches deep.[1] All this is represented, not as an incident in the historical development of man, or as instrumental to some advantage for any one, but only as a voluntary purpose in the consciousness of God, an end in itself—the calculated achievement of His spontaneous providence.

4. Imperfect in His benevolence.—For while He loves some He hates more, and continually creates men foredoomed to eternal damnation. He is a jealous God, and gives "salvation" in the stingiest way. Nay, voluntarily and on purpose, He created the devil, who is now a being absolutely evil. Of course He created him out of the absolute evil which was in Himself—there could be no other source for this material, for God's nature is a terminality of beginning as well as His purpose a finality of ending—from an evil motive, for an evil purpose, and as an appropriate means thereunto. The devil is not merely a mistake and a failure, but an intended marplot of the universe, a premeditated contradiction. This fly in the ointment of the apothecary does no good in heaven, earth, or hell, and is devised and intended for no good, helping neither any benevolent purpose of God, nor the development of man.

5. Imperfect in His holiness.—He does not keep the integrity of His consciousness, but wilfully violates His own better feelings. Thus He miraculously hardens Pharaoh's heart, bewildering his counsels; sends an evil spirit to Saul, and stealthily excites David to number the people of Israel that He might take vengeance upon them, thus deceiving with inspiration!

[1] See Rev. ix. 14—18, and xiv. 18—20.

It is plain that no Christian sect conceives of God as infinitely perfect in power, wisdom, justice, benevolence, and holiness. In their general description they all claim absolute perfection for their notion of Deity; in their specific details of character and conduct they all deny it. The idea of the infinitely perfect God is foreign to the Christian theology.

II. Of the false idea of man.—Man was created "in the image and likeness of God," but so badly made that he became an easy prey to the devil. His first step was a "fall," which so damaged his "nature" that ever since it has been "corrupt"—his action, even his thoughts "only evil continually." His body is damaged, and unnaturally mortal—at present not even living out a tithe of the original years of even fallen man; his mind—and he cannot distinguish between truth and error, unless a miracle intervene, nor always then; his conscience—he does not know good from evil; his heart—which is perverse and desperately wicked; his soul—that of itself would neither love nor even know God, or its own immortality. He is "depraved," if not "totally"—which is the instantial opinion of Christendom—at least "generally" and "effectually," so that he is substantially good for nothing; in his flesh and his spirit there is "no good thing!" He is immortal—so much the worse for him! What avails it to increase the quantity of human life while the quality is so bad and the ultimate ruin made sure of beforehand? Damnation alone waits for the souls of the mass of men. He can find out nothing certain about God; all the holy men who taught new religious truth to mankind did not actively learn the truth as men, but only passively received it from God, as bare pipes through which His "Revelation" flowed forth: they did not normally find out a truth, but God miraculously gave them a commandment.

All the rest of God's works are "perfect;" they turn out as He meant, and are adequate means for His purposes; but man is a failure—this wheel does not run well in the universal mill, nor accomplish the purpose it was intended for! Nay, with all manner of watching and mending, and lubricating with miracles, it works very ill, and God is sorry He made man on the earth, and it grieves

Him at His heart! Man's hand is perfect, his eye, his foot—the nervous system is complete and perfect as the solar system; but his "nature," his "heart," is evil, and only evil, and that continually!

III. OF THE FALSE IDEA OF THE RELATION BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.—There is an antagonism between the two, total and eternal—their "natures" irreconcilably conflicting; depraved man at variance with imperfect God! History is chiefly the record of this mutual hostility and conflict, the story of man's rebellion and God's vengeance therefor! Nay, the earth is a monument of the never-ending battle; the earthquakes and whirlwinds of its great elements, the thorns and thistles of vegetation, the strife of beasts of prey, and the "minor note" of the birds, all are alike the consequence and the memorial of this primeval but perpetual falling out between man and God. Eternity will repeat the antagonism—for as God once swept off procreant mankind by a transient flood of water, sparing but eight from a world of men, so at last He will ruin the majority of the whole human race in a permanent deluge of fire, wherein the million generations of men, each millions of millions strong, shall "perish everlastingly," in never-ending fiery rot, while He and the Devil alone shall take delight in this flaming massacre, this funeral pile of humanity, where the worm of agony dieth not in the fire of his wrath, which is not quenched for ever and ever. So perishable earth and ever-enduring hell are alike mementoes of this antagonistic relation; and God and His enemy, the Creator and the destroyer, are made one in their delight over the torment of the human race,—the devil gladdened that they fall and are "lost" from heaven, God rejoicing that they are damned and "found" in hell!

All the rest of man's history is but an exception; sin, misery, damnation are instantial—the general rule. A golden thread of divine grace runs through the human web, whereon are strung a few pearls of great price—patriarchs and prophets, saints and the elect—a flock of white in a whole field of sackcloth, which "poor human nature" continually weaves up, and dyes Egyptian black in the gall of inherited sin, the colour fast set and bitten in by the necessitated guilt of the individual.

In the ecclesiastical conception of God there is a deep back-ground of evil. Now and then the mysterious cloud is miraculously lifted and lets men see the mountain summits of anger, vengeance, jealousy, and hate, and imagine the whole chain of malignity, Andes and Himalayas of wrath, hid underneath the veil. There is not a book in the Bible which justifies the inference that God loves his children who die in wickedness, or that His hell is for the welfare of its melancholy inmates, only for the vengeance of their Creator.

Out of this dark mass of evil in Himself He created the devil—absolutely evil—and hell; both to last for ever, each a finality. The devil is also a child of God, but not acknowledged—turned off, an out-lying member of the Divine family, the Ishmael of the universe, his hand against God, God's against him. But after this mass of evil is subtracted and embodied in the devil, it is plain that evil still preponderates in the theological conception of God: for He does not bring the human race to a close, but still goes on creating new children of wrath, bowed down with the "sin" of "Adam's fall," before their birth doomed to eternal wretchedness. He might pardon, but He will not; stop creation, but He keeps the world going on, spawning whole shoals of people wherewith to fatten in hell! He might at least annihilate the damned; but even that were too merciful for His vindictive wrath; they must writhe in their agony for ever and ever!

Yet, though evil so far preponderates in the ecclesiastical idea of God, as shown in His conduct, some humane mercy is also ascribed to Him, with corresponding acts. He wishes to save a few brands from the burning of the world, to give some other men glimpses of a prospect of escape from ruin. So He prepares a scheme of "redemption" for a few—exceptions to the ruin of the rest.

IV. Of the false idea of inspiration. God communicated certain doctrines to various men, doctrines of revelation. They were not found out by the normal action of the various human faculties—intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious—for then they would be of human origin, and, like other opinions, amenable to mankind; but they were miraculously given by God himself to men in an ab-

normal passivity of their various human faculties; and are, accordingly, of Divine origin, not at all amenable to mankind. They are foreign plants miraculously brought from heaven and set out in our niggardly human soil. Inspiration takes place in this manner: the Spirit of God takes transient or continuous possession of a special person and acts through him; so the action is God's, and not man's—God the artist, man the tool. The doctrines thus miraculously communicated are infallible and authoritative—the standard measure of religion and morality. They are also a finality—when the revelation is once ended, nothing is ever to be added thereto; nought taken away. Revelation to one man is binding on all: thus words uttered by a half-civilized Hebrew, many centuries ago, in a state of ecstasy, or dream, or fit of wrath, must now be taken for the infallible oracles of God, by a man born with the highest genius and furnished with the most ample culture which the human race can bestow. He must accept every doctrine of revelation, though in direct variance with the noblest instincts of human nature and the demonstrations of human science. These doctrines of revelation, thus actively communicated by God and passively received by some man, are to be accounted as the primitive source of theological ideas—the fountain of all our knowledge of God and what pertains to religion; human reflection and imagination may only develope, but must not transcend, what lies latent in these seeds of knowledge!

V. OF THE FALSE IDEA OF SALVATION.—In consequence of the misstep and "fall" of Adam, God is permanently angry with the human race and inclined to damn all men to eternal torment. But His wrath has been somewhat mitigated, appeased and diverted from certain persons in this manner: the Divine Being is composed of three undivided personalities, who are equal in all respects. The second person—called the Son, though eternal and self-subsistent, as much as the first person, the Father—by His own will and consent becomes a man, "incarnated" in Jesus of Nazareth, "the only begotten Son of God," "born of a virgin," with no other human parent. He takes on himself all the wrath which God the Father felt for mankind, is crucified, and thus one undivided third part of the un-

changeable and eternal God dies—yet the sum total of Godhead is not diminished by this temporary subtraction—but comes to life again and rises from the dead. The "sufferings" of the Son are an "infinite expiation" and "satisfaction" to God for the sins of men, who may thus escape from hell by his "vicarious atonement." His "merits" are transferred to their account, and they may advance to heaven through his "imputed righteousness," the "Divine condition" of salvation. But men receive this Divine salvation—deliverance from hell by vicarious atonement, and admission to heaven by imputed righteousness—on certain terms, the "human condition" of salvation. And the terms are such that, of all who have hitherto lived, the "saved" are a most pitiful fraction compared to the "lost!" Hell is roomy and crowded, while heaven is narrow, but with many mansions all unoccupied! The great mass of men, before their birth, are doomed to eternal torment, whence no act of theirs can set them free. The whole "scheme of redemption," with the doctrines of revelation, the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of one undivided third part of the Godhead, salvation by Christ, has no other result but to save a handful, gleaned miraculously from the earthly field, while the great bulk of the human harvest, grown in so many centuries and reaped down by death, is shocked up by the devil for the threshing-floor of hell, where he and his angels shall flail at them for ever and ever, and winnow them with a fiery tempest of wrath, which lasts throughout all eternity.

These five false ideas are common to the three great parties into which the Christian Sect is divided—to the Greek church, the Latin church, and the German church. They all share the idea of an imperfect God—of a depraved and almost worthless human nature—of a relation of perpetual antagonism between God the Creator and man His work—of a miraculous inspiration, limited to a few persons—of a vicarious salvation, which helps only a few, while it leaves the great majority of mankind to perish for ever. These five false ideas are the chief thing in these Ecclesiastical Institutions, which take thence their peculiar form and special activity.

Omit, for the present, the specialities of the Greek church, which does not now influence the destinies of America, and consider, for a moment, the peculiar doctrine of the Latin and German churches—the other two-thirds of Christendom. To the above five points common to all Christendom, the Latin or Roman Catholic church adds these two ideas.

1. The Roman church—that is, practically, the clergy thereof—are the sole depository of the miraculous revelation, and are still miraculously and infallibly inspired. They alone have, in its fulness, the traditional part of the ecclesiastical institution—as well oral as written; they alone can produce the original part—which is only a development of the germ in the old. Thus they, and they alone, can interpret the Divine ideas of revelation and administer the Divine institutions thence arising. They continue the state of inspiration, miraculously preserving the old, miraculously developing the new.

2. The Roman church—that is, practically, its clergy—is the exclusive steward of this "salvation by Christ," appointed as the agent of God with a special power of attorney from Him to do all matters and things which He might do were He actually resident on the earth, whence He has now withdrawn and seceded. The Roman church is to dictate the terms on which this salvation shall be served out to nations and individual persons; to bind or loose in doctrine, advancing men to heaven, or relegating them to hell. She is the actual vicegerent and representative of God on earth; substantially is God.

In virtue of these two ideas, the Roman church determines the doctrines to be believed and the deeds to be done as a condition of salvation. She is a finality, is the norm of faith and works. Conformity therewith is the exclusive condition of present favour and final acceptance with God. There must be no ultimate free spiritual individuality in religious matters, no private judgment in theology, as she is God's vicar to determine theological thought and religious action, for each individual taking the place of mind and conscience, heart and soul; and as the human faculties are "totally depraved," and she "infallibly inspired," it is a great gain for the human race to

have their spiritual work done for them by so competent a hand.

The Roman church claims to be a Divine institution, not at all human in origin, function, or responsibility, but wholly of God; and even to Him amenable only as a part of Himself, an expansion of the Godhead. No amount of contradiction in the Catholic doctrines, or of wickedness in the infallible heads of the Church, diminishes the Divinity of the institution. She is one and indivisible, with absolute unity of doctrinal substance and practical form; no sects can be allowed, no historical progress in doctrine, for the *ultimatum* was attained at the very beginning. Accordingly the function of the Catholic priest is to administer the miraculous revelation—to dictate with authority the doctrines to be believed, the work to be done—and to communicate the vicarious salvation.

II. The German or Protestant church, entertaining these five false ideas common to Christendom, rejects the two subsidiary which are proper only to the Roman church, and developes this, which is her own peculiar and distinctive opinion: The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the sole depository of the miraculous revelation; they determine the doctrines to be believed, the works to be done, the conditions of salvation. They are the finality, the norm of faith and works. Conformity with them is the indispensable condition of present favour and final acceptance with God. Men must take the Bible as master; it is Divine in origin, function, and responsibility; nay, it is only an expansion of God. To the Catholic the Latin church is God, Deity embodied in the priesthood; to the Protestant the Bible is God, Deity bound up in a collection of books. The Bible contains all that man needs in theological matters, now and hereafter, all he can ever get —for it is not only God's word, but his last word, his last will and testament, for though living elsewhere He is now seceded and deceased from all direct communication with man. There is no inspiration now; it is all ended, the stream run dry. The Bible is signed, sealed, and delivered as and for the last will and testament of Almighty God.

But as there is no miraculous expounder of the miracul-

ous revelation, every man may and must interpret the Bible for himself. This is the weak part of this Ecclesiastical Institution considered as a finality: Each man has the right of private judgment, to determine the canon—what is Scripture; and the interpretation—what Scripture means. There may be individuality of opinion in religion as elsewhere. Within the lids of the Bible there is room for speculation. Nay, logically, the authority of the Bible itself is to be proved to the satisfaction of the individual before he accepts it as his master. Hence there can be no unity of doctrine or of form with the Protestants; and at the beginning the Teutonic individualism clove the new church into many parties, each having the general opinions of Protestantism and the special notions of Episcopalians, Congregationalists, and so forth.

The function of the Protestant minister is to administer the Bible, which contains the miraculous balm of salvation for the sin of depraved human nature; he must set forth the most important parts of the Bible, the doctrines, which are the essential and medicative substance of this balm. Hence come the efforts to distribute the Bible—the word of God—and doctrinal tracts, which contain the extract of Bible, the quintessence of the word of God. For as the strength of Samson lay not in his bones, and muscles, and sinews, but only in his hair, so the efficient and salvatory power of the Bible lies not in those beautiful parts which teach natural piety and natural morality, but only in its theological doctrines—especially in those five false ideas above set forth, which theological chemistry distils therefrom.

In both the Catholic and the Protestant churches all the fundamental theological doctrines are taught on external authority; the last appeal for the acceptance of doctrines is not to the consciousness of the individual believer pronouncing them just and true, but to the miraculous revelation declaring them Divine commands; not to the Spirit of God now in me, but what is alleged to have been the Spirit of God in some man long since dead and gone. Science rests on facts of consciousness and facts of observation, it is therefore "profane;" theology on the "said-so" of somebody, often of an anonymous writer in a rude and uncertain age, and is "Divine." One has the

evidence of human nature in us, and the world of matter out of us, and so roots into consciousness and observation; the other comes from the dictation of a minister or a priest, who dogmatizes at will about man, God, and the most important of all human concerns, and does not root into our spontaneous or reflected consciousness, and like doctrines of philosophy grow thence, but is only grasped by the will and thereby is retained.

In the Catholic church I ask, "What is truth; what is religion?" I am sent to the opinion of the Catholic church, which I must believe, not because it is true—for that would imply that I can myself determine what is true—but because the infallible church says it must be believed. So, as evidence of a theological doctrine—the existence of God, the immortality of the soul—I have the word of a Roman priest!

In the Protestant church I ask the same question, and am sent to the opinion of somebody in the New Testament or the Old. I am told to believe the doctrine, not because it is true, conformable to my own nature, but because it is written in the infallible Scriptures. And as evidence for a theological doctrine—the nature of God, or man, or daily duty—I have the word of somebody in the Bible!

Thus in both divisions of the Western church the free spirit of humanity is shut out, and we are referred to an outward standard, not one within mankind. I ask the Catholic, "How do you know your church is infallible?" and the Protestant, "What is the proof of the Divinity and infallibleness of your Bible?" but neither has any valid argument to offer; each assumes the chief point on which all else depends, and puts a master on the neck of mankind. The inquirer is not to ask, "What is true—conformable to the instincts and reflections of human nature?" only, "What is ecclesiastical and of the church? or, What is Scriptural and of the Bible?" Thus the outside caprice of some man, often of some unknown man, is made to take precedence of the facts of the universe. God is postponed and a priest preferred.

What is yet worse, in both the Latin and the German church, much more stress is laid on the Christian theology than on the Christian religion. Natural piety, natural morality—the religion of human nature—is thought good

for nothing; stigmatized as "deism," "infidelity," which "saves nobody," "good to live with, not to die by." Religion is accessory, theology principal.

In the Christian theology there are doctrines, good and bad, much older than Jesus, things from him and his time, many from a later date. The Christian church was the residuary legatee of the institutions it slew, or which perished without such foreign aid. It retained many of the best things of Hebrew and heathen antiquity; one thing it left out of its treasury—free individuality of spirit, freedom in philosophy, freedom in religion. Yet it was this which made the moralists, poets, and philosophers of the heathen institutions, the prophets and psalmists of the Hebrew institutions; yes, it made Jesus and his apostles. The church kept the child's swaddling bands, the fictitious likeness of father and mother, the gossip of nurses, and the little cradle, but it shook out the live baby; it kept the wonderful draught of fishes which toilsome mankind had caught, called it "miraculous," and then forbid all persons to cast net or angle in the great deep of humanity, whence it had been taken. Hereafter that ocean must be shunned as a dead sea; and fishers therein must be held blasphemous, and burned with the fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

There is one great scheme of theology common to the Christian sects; it was gradually formed in the dark and middle ages, and contains both good and evil. It was a growth out of human nature, perhaps as unavoidable, under the circumstances, as the particular schemes of agriculture or politics of that time, coming as the feudal system, as alchemy, and astrology, and other experiments of man. Of course the Ecclesiastical Institutions are no more supernatural than the pattern of merchant-ships, or the constitution of the republic of San Marino. Mistakes in the form of religion—feelings, opinions, actions—are no more surprising than mistakes in the form of the family or the community; false ideas in theology not more astonishing than in philosophy or business—which are all attempts at progress, and advance by experiment. But these Ecclesiastical Institutions are forced on man as "Di-

vine," of "miraculous origin." The Catholic priest says, "The church is all glorious, not a spot or blemish on her," and "out of the church is no salvation." The Protestant minister says, "The Scriptures are all Divine, no human wrinkle in the Divine leaves, where inspiration yet flutters, and wherein revelation is written; out of the Bible there is no salvation!" It is easy to be mistaken; it is also not difficult to deceive others, at least to make the attempt. Is this innocent error, or pernicious deception? The clergy are the most learned body in Christendom; are they also the most stupid? Men will answer this question as they must. The church and the state are ruled by men tempted alike, perhaps equally honest. There is wicked legislation, wicked doctrinization—good also in both kinds.

These Ecclesiastical Institutions of Christendom contain much good; but their worst things rest on the same "Divine revelation," and claim the same "supernatural authority." The same "revelation" gives us God and the dreadful malignity of God; a little spot of heaven it gives us, and then crowds humanity down into its bottomless hell, roaring with that infernal sea's immeasurable taunt at our endless agony. The same fountain gives us a little brook of sweet fair water, enough for a household, and then drowns the world in a deluge of hell-fire.

A chain is no stronger than its weakest link; if the rest be of iron, and one joint only be of straw, when the weight is put on the chain snaps in its weakest part. With these notorious faults in it, the "miraculous communication from God," its "infallible revelation," the "authoritative rule," is good for nothing; its "hell" destroys its "heaven," and the malignant and foolish character it ascribes to God makes its testimony as to the existence of God utterly worthless. The chain which let down God to our sight breaks off at the link of devil. Allow me to take the chain to pieces, and use the good sound metal, either in its present form when thus serviceable, or as old iron to be heated afresh and wrought into new shapes for use or beauty, it is of great value. The links of sand and straw may go for what they are worth, the magazine of iron serves our purpose. But if we must use it as a chain, it is not only good for nothing, holding no weight, but still worse than no-

thing, failing when we rely on it most, and, beside that, falling upon our heads.

But what can stand against the spirit of mankind? Chain the wind! Let me see you! It bloweth where it listeth. In the sixteenth century the free-thinkers of Europe, who were only the head of a column of doubt which reached across the dark ages, attacked the infallibility of the Romish church. Down went the outer wall, and through its wide breach all North Germany, Scandinavia, Anglo-Saxondom, with half Holland and Switzerland, marched forth to new fields. In vain did atheistic Rome let off her mock lightnings and stage thunders at Luther and Calvin; the Latin herd of bulls went down before the terrible charge of Teutonic horse, led by such champions as Gustavus and Cromwell. The whole camp of Christian theology was in confusion.

Other free-thinkers followed; the Socinians, with their coadjutors, attacked the Trinity. "God is one," said they, "not triple; Jesus is not Jehovah; the Son not the Father. God cannot be born, be a baby, a boy, a man, and then die. It is not in the Bible; if it were, we would believe it; we renounce the Trinity." So there rose up the Unitarians—not very numerous, but powerful through their arguments and character. In turn the Trinitarians screamed their maledictions. "You are no followers of Jesus, not Christians; you have denied the Lord that bought you. God not die! Did not God the Father 'make bare his red right arm, and on Calvary stab through and kill his only begotten Son?' Without God manifested in Christ, we should not know any God at all. You are Atheists!" But a new breach was made in the mediæval wall of Christendom, and other men marched forth. The whole citadel of theology was again in peril.

Then kind-hearted men, free-thinking further yet, said, "There can be no such thing as eternal damnation; God is not a devil, He is a Father; there is no future torment at all, or if any, it is correction in love, not revenge in hate. Listen to all these blessed beatitudes of Old Testament and New; eternal hell is not in the Bible: if it were we should believe it." A great outcry was made against these lovers of mankind. "What! give up hell;

our own eternal hell?" exclaimed the damnationists. "You have taken away our Lord, and we know not where you have laid Him; there can be no religion if eternal torment do not scare depraved man out of his senses." Still this denial went on and multiplied, and a third great breach was made in the battled wall, while all the Ecclesiastical Institutions shook as hell was wrenched away from underneath that corner of the church.

These breaches cannot be filled up; the German Protestant goes not back to the "Infallible Roman church;" the Unitarian has consulted his "carnal reason," and no longer believes that the Eternal God once lay, newly born, a baby in the arms of his virgin mother, and was fed from her bosom; the Universalist returns no more to the "doctrine of devils," but refuses to worship a God who would damn even a New England stealer of men. Who can annul a fact? The charmed wall of Christian theology is cloven through in three places. Shall mankind build up the breach? It were as easy to reverse the motion of the great rivers of the continent, and make the Atlantic ascend the St Lawrence, climb up the steep of Niagara, and empty its vast volume into the lake of the woods.

Let in the great body of the Christian church this old theology still prevails. The Catholics outnumber the Protestants as three to two, all the Celto-Romanic nations yet cleave to the Latin church, and are shut up in the clenched fist of the Pope. With the greater part of the Protestants hell and the Trinity are still treasured in their "creed." Even the Unitarians and Universalists cleave to "salvation by Christ," which means nothing in theology unless Christ be a God-man to save, and there be also "a dreadful fiery hell" of eternal duration, and wrath of God kept for ever, which we are to be saved from: they cleave to external authority, and will not credit the immortality of the soul, or the obligations of duty, unless they find it written in the Bible and confirmed by "miracles." So in theology they know no ultimate God but of paper, which they worship instead of the Infinite Cause and Providence of the universe, who confronts us ever, go we where we may. Accordingly they also accept the old "revelation" as the *Ultima Thule* of religion,

spurn the thought of the new inspiration good as the old, and count it blasphemy to suppose there ever can be another man as wise and religous as Jesus of Nazareth! So the littlest of sects must have their defenders of the faith to hoot out "Infidel," "Deist," and put a fence high as the Roman wall about the little, transient, thin-soiled summer garden of cooling fruits. In each sect of Protestantism it is still a heresy to believe theologic truth because it is true, or to hope for progress beyond the Ecclesiastical Institutions of Christendom.

But a movement more important than that of Luther has long been going forward. Men deny all these five false ideas, and undermine the foundation of the Christian theology, the miraculous revelation itself. Here come the "Deists" of the seventeenth and other centuries, and the powerful mockers from various ages, who, though sitting in the seat of the scornful, have yet done mankind great service with the terrible arrows of their wit. Here also come the philosophers of many a wiser school, material and transcendental.

In the seventeenth century, in the age of Bacon, Milton, Newton, Locke, out of the midst of the uneducated peasantry of England, there rose up a man gifted with great genius of religion, its emotions and its ideas, and taught truths whose size and beauty amazed the thoughtful world. At one step George Fox went centuries in advance of Christendom. He felt that the Ecclesiastical Institutions of his time were not final; that "Christianity" itself is not God's last word and dying confession; that the Spirit of God in us must not be driven out to let in the word of some other man, for God in the soul is greater than all Bibles out of it. He did not comprehend his own great sentiments; yet here and there his emotion broke forth into noble doctrines. But the age was too early; he and his friends turned back to the Ecclesiastical Institutions of the time, and also worshipped the stocks and stones of an alleged revelation, grieving away the free spirit of God which comes like new morning to all risen souls—yea, to all the slumbering and such as will not wake. "Oppression maketh wise men mad," and the attractions of the

Christian theology may easily draw even a great man from the self-subsistency of pure human religion. It is

> "The most difficult of tasks to keep
> Heights which the soul is competent to gain."

The succeeding Quakers were still more easily satisfied with the poor ideas which the Christian theology offered of God, of man, of their relation, of miraculous and finished inspiration, and salvation by another's blood; they contented themselves with making broad their phylacteries, with enlarging the borders of their garments, and being called of men "thee" and "thou." But while listening for the echo of footsteps taken thousands of years gone by, they heeded not the beauteous Presence then and there passing before them, and not far from each. No wonder their prophetic blossom fell idle, and they brought no fruit to perfection. But the rise of such men as John Woolman, Job Scott, Elias Hicks, and a few others, as well men as women, showed that the ashes which a Christian theology raked over Fox and Nayler, and Barclay and Penn, could not smother the seeds of fire which God planted in human nature, and with the fresh breath of inspiration quickens to new and fair religious life. How vain to worship an idol!

> "Thee, Thee alone art everlasting, and the blessed spirits
> Which thou includest as the sea her waves."

All along, in all the ages of populous mankind, there have risen up sons of the spirit who scorned the little theologies of Hebrew, or heathen, or Christian churches, left such farthing candles under the priest's bushel or the couch of a nun, and in the light of God's morning went forth amid the grass and the flowers of nature, catching the song of earliest birds, and, like the newly risen sun, serving and praising God by their free joyous life of daily duty. When shall we close the lists and seek truth no more? When humanity gives up the ghost. The loving of the maiden is beautiful and joyous as the wedlock of the bride. Noble German Luther said, "If God would stand before me, truth in his right hand, search for truth in the left, and

say, 'Choose, Martin, which thou wilt,' I would bow me down at his left hand and say, 'Oh! Father, give me search after truth; though I wander and fall into many an error, I will journey ever forward and upward unto Thee!'"

Now all the sects in America share these false ideas, and rest them on a basis which they pretend is Divine. They know only an imperfect God, a depraved mankind, and an antagonistic relation between the two; no revelation but one miraculous, unnatural, and long since ended; no safety but the vicarious "Salvation by Christ!"

The function of the "Christian minister" is not to educate the mind and conscience, and heart and soul of the people; not to learn and teach absolute truth, justice, loveliness, and self-subsistent holiness, but to administer the alleged revelation—of the Bible or the church—and bend and twist "our fallen human nature" into the shape demanded by the Ecclesiastical Institutions: he must bow him down before the old inspiration, not also for himself win and receive the new. The thirty thousand Christian ministers of the United States do not aim to produce natural religion, natural morality in men, the largest development of manhood and womanhood, but to make them partakers of the vicarious salvation, to rid them of human nature, the "natural heart," and appease the wrath of God. Prayer is to humanize the Deity, not to elevate and develope man. Thus religion, the most powerful of all emotions in man, is turned away from its natural function and disfigures our life; it smutches the face with cowardice and unwomanly terror, and makes us go stooping and feeble, with eyes which dare not look up, and hearts that quiver and quail at the name of eternity, or its God! Hence the ministers of Christianity are no more powerful for good works. Some of them are able men, educated at great cost, no class of men so bookish and academic; a few are devoted, self-denying men; the majority chose their calling with an unselfish love for it; some of them would lay down their lives for mankind. But while they consider it is their function not to provide for men's bodies by teaching us how to live a natural life of industry, tem-

perance and thrift, full of strength, truth, and comeliness; not to educate men's minds, developing the intellectual power to know truth and beauty, and handsomely report and apply the same; not to unfold the conscience so that we shall both know and keep the natural law which God enacts in the constitution of man; not to bring out the affections till we love each other in all the forms of human endearment—filial, connubial, parental, affiliated, friendly, and philanthropic; not to cultivate the soul so that we shall know the real God by heart—not merely trembling beneath a fabled Deity imported from some foreign consciousness and plied upon us—and taste, and see, and feel His infinite perfection, till we also partake of His excellence and become one with Him, inspired by his truth, justice, and love, communing with Him in all noble life, and having no fear, but serving with continual growth of our being to absolute love and absolute truth;—while they do none of these things, but as their chief and instantial function seek to administer what at best were only a foreign, old, and finished inspiration, if it could be even that; and communicate a salvation alleged to be wrought out by one who died two thousand years ago; while for ultimate authority they appeal, not to the spirit of God within me now, in my own mind and conscience, heart and soul, not even to that spirit outside of me in the green and transient beauty of this earthly spring, or the perennial loveliness of the heavens whose spring is eternal, but to an old revelation, impossible to verify, made, it is said, to men long since dead, of whom I know little, and that not wholly to their credit as teachers of truth, full of errors obvious not less than manifold; while they appeal to low motives in me, to mean and selfish fear, now bribing with heaven, now scaring with hell, bewildering history with capricious fable, and philosophy with shameful theologic myths, preaching up an imperfect God who hates and will damn all his creatures save a scanty few, they seldom the noblest—and thunder forth all this mad volley against a heart which they declare totally depraved, incapable of any good thing, fertile only of evil, how can they succeed in elevating mankind to the dignity of human nature? True, there are noble men in all the churches, noble ministers in every sect, but they work for a vain purpose, counting it their

business to "pacify God," who yet needs no appeasing; they would save men from the fabulous "wrath to come," not from the real evils of want, ignorance, vice, oppression, and abnormal conduct in all its thousand forms; they tell us to get rid of human nature, not to avoid the errors of human experiment, not to develope this noblest creation of God to its commensurate destination. They tell us that the manliest of all the Greek and Roman heroes, patriots, philosophers, and bards, the women whose beautiful souls bloomed into natural piety, the millions of common people faithful to all which God gave them, must "perish everlasting;" and even the magnanimous saints of the Hebrew or the Christian age were not such by their nature born in them, or their voluntary use of it, but by a "miracle of grace" wrought in their passive substance by the Almighty Artist; that character saves no man; only Christ can "redeem!" It is not large, self-reliant manhood which ministers ask to make us "Christians," but the acceptance of another's action in place of my own. You read of "conversions," thickly following in these days: generally it does not mean the education of the man, but how often only that he has learnt a new trick of whining, or of believing something which he cannot even credit when in full possession of himself! Jesus of Nazareth is one of the last men who could be "converted" to this "Christianity" of our times! What a heretic that great magnificent soul would be to our Ecclesiastical Institutions! A missionary of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts writes from the Crimea: "The soldier is very childlike in some things; he has been so long accustomed to obey that he has not been allowed to form notions or have opinions, and thus he is in a fit state to receive the good news, the glad tidings of salvation; he receives it in simplicity." So in his highest condition the Christian is only a suckling on the miraculous bosom of the church! Must then the sons of the church be only continual babies?

No doubt the Ecclesiastical Institutions of Christendom are the greatest obstacle now in the way of man's progress, retarding and perverting the intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious development of the human race. Still, they are not able to destroy the instinct for progress, and in

America hold back the tide of improvement. While the Christian sects have been building up this dark theology of unreason, there has been a great growth of philosophy and religion. See what a forest of science and literature has sprung up outside of the churches, and in spite of the mildew of their breath.

All over Christendom thoughtful men have broken with the ecclesiastical traditions. They find there is no such imperfect and dreadful God! no such totally depraved man as the Church pretends; no such antagonism between the Divine and human nature; no such miraculous revelation, or vicarious salvation; that there is no infallible church, nor infallible Bible; no Trinity, no incarnation, no eternal hell, no miracle; that the history of man's religious development is no more mysterious than the history of his agriculture or astronomy: nay, that all the great steps are forward and upward, this ghastly theology itself one of the manifold experiments of humanity, in our triumphant march —a stumble, but forward.

Some of these are philosophers—men of science, of metaphysics—who have profoundly studied the world of matter and of man, and become familiar with human history. Some are philanthropists; they labour for the oppressed and perishing; take the part of the laity against the priesthood; of the people against the tyrant; of woman against man, who holds her down by force; of the slave against his master; of him that suffers wrong against whose does the wrong. They seek to spread knowledge, industry, temperance, riches, health, beauty, and long life, and purity, and every human virtue amongst all men. They would promote peace between nations, and found society on coöperative industry, not on mutual selfish antagonism.

All these men have broken with the Ecclesiastical Institutions, Catholic and Protestant. They ask not its heaven, nor tremble at its hell. There is a great body of thinking men in America and England, who have outgrown the mediæval theology; they are not "in a fit state to receive the good news, the glad tidings of salvation," for they have been accustomed "to form notions and have opinions" of their own. Over these the church has lost its ancient power. Some of them wander away into speculative athe-

ism, disgusted with the very name of religion. Do you marvel at it? Remember what has been offered them in that name! Many stop this side of that extreme, but yet have no conscious religion. Full of pious feeling, rich in moral conduct, and in hope for mankind, they are religious without belief in God, and hopeful with no expectation of a future heaven.

I look with great pain on the men whom the Christian theology has driven away from religion; they are the confessors and martyrs of the church of the future. Saints of denial, their fidelity drove them forth from institutions which could not satisfy the thoughtful man. They found no rest, "in wandering mazes lost." They went on the forlorn hope of mankind, to storm the castle of despair; they perish in the ditch, crushed by the wall they overthrow. In a better age they would go first and foremost in building up the great temple of piety. Now they only prepare for its foundation, and never see its blessed walls; Simeons who die without the consolation!

But how much more do I mourn over the less manly fate of such as accept these institutions, and are benumbed by the narcotics of the church, till all their manhood is paralyzed, and they lie there, coffined in their pews, which rest on crumbling graves, stifled with the miasma thereof, swathed about with the mummy-cloths of a theology that is Egyptian in its darkness if not in age, and burthened with a torpor, profound, heavy, and similar to death, were it not visited with fear, that dreadful nightmare which haunts the church! It is better that doubt deprive us of sleep, rather than belief take all our life away. For what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world of theology, and lose the integrity of his own consciousness; or what shall a man get in exchange for his soul? The name "Christian;" the title "orthodox!"

I know ministers chide at this as "a material age." Never was one so spiritual before. There was never so much action of the highest faculties in man—never so much wise thought, such science, such metaphysics, such history, such beautiful creations of intellectual magnificence. There was never so much morality—such keeping of the natural laws of God; never so much benevolence amongst men, nor so much piety—reverence for truth,

justice, love, and holiness; never so much love for the Infinite God. But this spiritual activity does not put its new wine in the old leathern bottles of the church. So the church thinks it fit only for the devil's sacrament! It builds no Pyramids, nor Parthenons, nor cathedrals of St Peter, "indulging" a hemisphere in purchased wickedness that it may pile up sandstone and marble in the name of God. It does not engage in a crusade against brother men in the name of Him whose early word was, "Love your neighbour as yourself," and his latest, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" No colonies are founded in the name of religion, because the nations which swarm forth into new hives have conquered the oppressive church and now can enjoy their religion at home. The Puritan builds him his meeting-house in old England; the Quaker need not "bear his testimony" by leaving the grave of his mother; the Waldenses may fill all the valleys of the Alps, with none to molest or make them afraid. We exaggerate the religiousness of past times and underrate our own. The millions who went to the Holy Land in the Dark Ages, with the red cross on their shoulders, to fight the Saracen, had as little of true religion as the filibusters who would pillage Cuba and Mexico; or the mob who crowded to the funeral of Bill Poole in New York. Once ignorant men honestly affirmed the popular theology; now man enlightened denies it and spurns it away.

Reverence for God sends men to study nature, his undoubted Scriptures—the world of matter his Old Testament, the world of man his New. There was never such a profound and wide-spread love of truth, and search after it. Look at Germany and France, which lead in the world's science, literature, and art; look at England and America, following with our slower Saxon brain, our heavier and more material feet! See how in those perennial diagrams of fire men study the thought of God demonstrated in the geometric science of the sky, or in the deeper heaven of man's nature watch the course of those human stars for ever wheeling round the central orb, which is unseen though felt through all our history!

The religious spirit of this age shows itself in the attempt to found better political institutions, which shall in-

sure unity of action to millions, and yet destroy the personal freedom of no man. Look back a few hundred years,—what were all the six crusades to the American and French Revolutions—to the Year of Revolutions so recently passed by? What was the pretended discovery of the true cross, of the tomb of Jesus, of the lance which pierced his side, compared with the attempts to abolish slavery, war, pauperism, ignorance, drunkenness! One was the search for a piece of wood, or iron, or stone; the other an attempt to elevate man to the image of God. It was an act of piety to build the cathedrals of Europe. What is it to build up such communities of men as the new free States of America, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota? Are the mechanical inventions of this age to pass for nothing! Now the gospel of mind is preached to matter, material elements have heard the word with joy; and in this new pentecost, earth, air, fire, water, lightning, have received the Holy Ghost, and are baptized with thought; obedient to the heavenly vision, they become servants of the church of humanity, and are ministers to promote the true salvation of mankind—clothing the naked, giving bread to the poor, and education to the thoughtful and the heedless.

See what reform of laws goes on continually; what pains are taken to defend the most exposed classes of mankind. Down must fall the gallows—type of a malignant God; the Sun of Righteousness must shine into the dungeon; jails must no more be savage torture-chambers, but civil hospitals to heal the sickly man; crime must become amenable to correction which would bless, not subject only to vengeance which would but burn and kill. Drunkenness must end, and American democracy forges her sharpest, heaviest axe, grinds it to rough and dreadful edge, then smites it down upon that beast with seven ghastly heads, and seventy times as many ample-tined horns all red with murder;—drunkenness must die. Pauperism must lay off its rags—no longer sitting in the dirt of Dives' gate with no attendance save the dogs', unasked—but the science of the age shall heal the beggar of his poverty, which is the destruction of the poor. The lame must walk, the public finding crutch; the blind must see with foreign eyes, germane not alien; the deaf must hear

with other sense which human science gives; and in his fingers the dumb man finds a tongue, and yet no miracle. In his right mind the lunatic sits clothed. The harlot, seduced by passion once, or scourged by want, must now be wooed back to comely womanhood once more; the nun, no longer in idle dreams worshipping the "Virgin Mother of God," reclaims these hard-entreated sisters of men, daughters and victims, the clean hand washing that so deeply polluted. Children derelict of their parents—wrecks of drunkenness, ignorance, and crime—must find fathers and mothers in the public lap. Nay, the poor fool—whom in "the ages of faith" kings and Popes mocked at, who, rigged with motley cap and bells, went a hideous jest, the companion of apes, in theologic and monarchic courts, and even in the humane Bible, was pointed at with dreadful hootings—in the new democracy must now be lifted up to the dignity of man. Even the abortions of humanity must be respected and beloved. Walls of partition fall away from between us; the patient philanthropist knows no race but the human, no class but of men and women. The Turk must not be oppressed, though the unity of Christendom be broke to rescue him; and now the foremost nations of the Latin and the Teutonic church join hands to help the Mohammedan against the Christian of Russia. "The Jews are the slaves of the church," said St Thomas Aquinas, "which can dispose of their goods." Now the Jew must have the same rights as the Christian, for these depend on human nature itself. Wars must cease; the fetters fall from the limbs of the slave; if Christian theology chain him, the chain will drag down the unmanly church. The savage must be fed with the science of the civilized. Woman must be the equal of man, rejoicing in the same ecclesiastic, political, social, domestic, and individual rights, commensurate with her duties and her nature; and so the garden wherein God put the choicest human mould and planted the divinest seeds of heaven, long trodden under foot and made the commonshore of ambition and of lust, must now bring forth its natural flowers of humanity, whose fragrance is the breath of God, and their fruit for the healing of the nations.

Behold the great philanthropies of our time! But in

this work—the greatest work of the most noble age—the servants of the Ecclesiastical Institutions can do little in their professional capacity. As religious men, they may do much; as "theological ministers," how little! True, there are noble ministers, worthiest followers of Jesus of Nazareth—nay, leaders far in advance of that Son of God, in the nineteenth century venturing where he never trod, nor could not step so long ago—who engage in all these noble deeds of humanity. But they are heretics, really, if not all plain to see! The mass of ministers—what do they care for the bondage of the slave, the degraded position of woman, for the vices of the age, which cheat man of his birthright? They can quote theology to prove them all virtues. It is their function to "baptize" men, or babies rather, to "convert" them to the popular theology, admit them to the church, to a dispensation of wine and bread in the meeting-house, and bury their bodies when dead; not to humanize and elevate them to great manhood. With those five false theological ideas, what can thirty thousand ministers do? What they do! I find no peculiar fault with them; I pity far more than I blame—for I know too well how ecclesiastical education blinds the eye with thick bandages of old prejudice, and then is called "teaching man to see with the Spirit." The ecclesiastical minister is to alter the disposition of God, not that of man. He is to deal with the "original sin" inherited from "Adam," not the actual offences against natural law which originate with you and me. He is to help a few men out of hell; it is not lust, drunkenness, gaming, violence, idleness, theft, murder—vices of passion; it is not pride, vanity, covetousness, ambition, deceit, cruelty, and lust for power, and all the other vices of calculation, which cast men down; they are damned for the taint of Adam, "the fault of our general human nature," not for our personal misconduct as Emily and James. Adam's sin is the Cerberus of the Christian mythology; there in hades he crouches, keenly scenting the "guilt" of the "unredeemed," and with pitiless baying hounds them off to hell. The ecclesiastical minister is to help express a few lean and hungry souls to heaven; but the ticket demanded at that slow-yielding gate is not the golden branch plucked from the tree of life, planted, indeed, by God, but watered, tended, hus-

banded by us, radiant with youthful flowers, and rich with manly fruit of every virtuous sort; no, it is a certificate of "baptism," of "conversion" to the opinion of the Catholics or the Quakers, or other little sect, or that he is tattooed all over with some man's ancient whim; no healthy spot of natural skin left whole. Adamitic virtue is not welcome there—"salvation is by Christ." Not a sect in the Christian world proclaims "salvation" by character, by honest efforts to do a man's best; not one demands the moral development of all the faculties as the great work of life, and the service of God! Each sect is termagant to war against the fictitious sin of Adam; not one is strongly militant to fight against the incidental errors of our historic development, the great vices which lay waste the sons and daughters of men. They can compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and then teach him that there is "no higher law." "American slavery is a divine institution," and "the fugitive slave bill is worthy of the church of Christ." "According to their pasture so are they filled." Can you expect better work from such tools? Who could cut down the woods of Nebraska with an Indian axe of stone? What if you had only the industrial tools of the Pennsylvania red man three hundred years ago? How would your harvests look? Where would your cities shine?

I say there was never so much normal action of the higher faculties in man; but there is no Ecclesiastical Institution which can organize and direct this action, or even encourage it. In the churches of America, Mr Polk and Mr Webster are counted better Christians than George Washington or Benjamin Franklin. No philanthropist ranks so high as the authors of the fugitive slave bill. Slavery is "orthodox," "Christian." Ay, is of the Christian theology! There is no popular theology, no science of religion, to go forth in advance of the age, with its great idea of God and of man, a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, leading us out of the house of bondage, through red seas and sandy deserts, to the land of promise. The Hebrew church, which brought Israel up out of Egypt, perished in Jerusalem; the Buddhistic poorly feeds the half-civilized millions of Asia. The Mohammedan church, which once led the Shemites to such wide

victory, has twice been broken by the dreadful Teutonic axis, and now sees her crescent in its last quarter; its silver light is too feeble for nations to walk by on the path of science, letters, or noble manly life, and the morning comes on apace. The once powerful church, so sadly misnamed, which honours only the Christ of fiction, not yet the Jesus of fact, with her triple crown of nationalities —Greek, Latin, German—no longer sits the heir of all the ages, and the queen of civilization. Twice the ministers of this Ecclesiastical Institution have led the movements of the Western world. Once, when they felt the warm breath of that great Hebrew Peasant—a poor woman's child, cradled among the oxen at Bethlehem—and walking by the evening splendour reflected from his genius just gone down, all filled and inspired by the womanly comeliness and manly sublimity of his life, the apostles and martyrs—two by two, they wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted not, but went from one kingdom to another people, few in number and strangers in it, despised and rejected of men—they led the world with their austere piety and victorious confidence in God. Once again the Christian clergy, richly endowed, with studious men in their well-fed ranks, had a monopoly of superior education; they alone kept alive the torch of science, once lighted by that spark which Greek Prometheus had brought down from God; their garden alone escaped the barbaric flood, the new deluge, which so wasted all the world besides, and therein many a choice plant of ancient husbandry still grew, enriching its literary bloom with all the sweetness and mysterious meaning of ancient times; yea, new plants therein sprung up, by spontaneous generation from the all-quickening life of nature. Then the fathers and doctors—wide-browed, their tall heads worn with thought—they led the world; and as a symbol of their intellectual mastery, straightway sprang up new organizations of matter, the vast cathedrals of the Western world, those flowers of stone, the hanging gardens of the Latin Church, which still amaze the world, whereto the elements seemed moving 'neath the orphic impulse of creative mind. Then, too, came forth those priestly companies of monks and nuns—the master mind

new organized in mortal men, unarmed and armed the most—who tyrannized over tyrants, and ruled the world by hope and fear, with tragic witchery of thought.

But that Teutonic giant who smote the Roman state, and doubly smote Mohammed's power, has also broke the Latin church. For three hundred years no great and world-compelling thinker is her son. Now she is a widow. No other church assumes her ancient and imperial rank. The printing press has slain the Pope. Since Luther spoiled the ecclesiastic charm,—still more, since the American and French Revolution wrenched in twain so many a yoke, the Christian church has ceased to lead the religious feelings and philosophic thoughts of men, which whoso rules, holding the heart and head of Christendom, perforce controls the civilization of mankind, and guides the column, and directs the march. The more than apostolic piety, which evangelizes its beatitudes of philanthropy to suffering mankind; the orphic intellect which far outgoes the mediæval mind, and thinks into being railroads, factories, steam-ships, electric telegraphs, and crystal palaces of mechanic art, or builds up vast commonwealths of men—this is not "divine," or of theologic thought, but natural "carnal reason," "rebellious and profane"—the Christian religion, no doubt, but not Christian theology at all.

The Ecclesiastical Institutions of Christendom are now to enlightened Europe and America what the Hebrew theology was to the thoughtful Israelites, when "all Jerusalem went out" to John the Baptist; yea, what the classic mythology was in Rome and Athens when Paul of Tarsus set thitherward his manly feet. Now, as then, the more enlightened soothsayers dare not in public look each other in the face, lest the spontaneous laugh betray the calculated cheat; now, as then, the Ecclesiastical Institution builds tombs to old prophets, while it stones the new; sustains man-stealing, passes fugitive slave bills, whitens its neckcloth, devours widows' houses, and for a pretence makes long prayers. Now, the Sadducee has "renounced the world," and joined the Pharisaic church! Why not? It costs him nought; it is a church of theology, and its "religion has nothing to do with politics;" nothing with trade; nothing with life.

All the great world-sects have done service to mankind; each of the three still living—Buddhistic, Christian, Mohammedan—is of value still. Not a Christian sect but has yet some work to do—rears a little herb, else neglected, or picks a crumb which falls from mankind's table, whence even the fragments must be gathered up and nothing lost. The dreadful theology I have spoken of—nay, the five false ideas therein, though the most ghastly errors of human consciousness—have still been of service to the world. He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him! What grim laws of our fathers' day went before the humane legislation of their sons! What wars once reddened the land where now but peaceful cities stand! Productive industry—the slave is father of that swarthy queen! Astrology and alchemy were once the sciences which filled the ablest heads of Europe. Without these there had been no Leibnitz and Newton, no Humboldt and La Place. Let us do no injustice to the wild-man, without garments for his limbs, or language for his baby thoughts. Abraham, in the mystic story, could faithfully offer up his son a human sacrifice to his conception of a blood-devouring deity. Let us honour ancient fidelity; when mankind was a child he thought as a child! Nay, let us be patient with men whom defect of nature, or the perversion of their schooling, makes fit to think such sacrifice could ever be commanded by the God who made the world. Chide not the slow march of the red man in the woods, his captive wife bearing his burthens on her feeble back; mock not at his little cockle of bark which barely skims a stream, while our railroad train, on our iron tracks, a town of people in its arms, drives through the land with more than windy speed; or, while our ship, propelled by steam, can bear a burthen of many a hundred tons, and front all the fierceness of the Atlantic sea. By the errors of our fathers, yea, brothers, let us, in all humility, be taught.

Allow all the service which the Christian church has done—nay, more, still does; yet her day of power is long since gone by. The open and professed atheism of a few scientific men, who think they think there is no God; the wide-spread doubt of thoughtful men, who are not certain of any conscious mind which plans the world and so insures the destination of mankind; the half-acknowledged dis-

trust of immortality; the American politician's scornful denial of any law of God above the lowest lusts of the profligate or the most cruel calculations of the madly ambitious, and the American ministers' cowardly assent thereto; the fact that all reformers who mean the people's good find readiest and longest-continued opposition from the church; the added fact that great masses of sober, thoughtful, moral and religous men and women—farmers, traders, mechanics, scholars too—have no faith in the popular theology, attend meeting only on sufferance, while the minister himself has no confidence in the "foolishness of his preaching," which is not weighty with argument, but only heavy with routine, knows not what to say, and abandons speech on all which touches daily life or a nation's work;—all this shows that the Ecclesiastical Institutions of Christendom do not, nay, cannot lead the religious man who could know God and love Him too; cannot even scare the trader in wickedness who has set his heart on pleasure, office, gold, and power, nor fright the glutton from his beastly lust! The established church of France and England dares not rebuke a governmental sin. In the land of Luther the king is the minister, a German Pope ecclesiastic, all free speech flies even from his colleges, and dwells with "Atheists." The British Bishops are less religious than the "Manchester school of politicians" in the House of Commons; are ever at war with human nature. In 1850, and ever since, you saw how deep this rottenness had forced its way into the American Churches. Even the Senate was outdone in practical atheism; it was the pulpit would send its mother into bondage for ever!

But what then? Truth has not perished!

"The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by Seers or Sibyls told,
In groves of oak or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world has never lost."

No doubt these are times of great danger, and those who have always leaned on the crutch of authority will find it hard to stand when that crutch is broken. But the child

must sometime walk alone, or never be a man. It is by experiment that mankind learns to walk. Let us rejoice in the day when humanity assumes the manly dress! One day these Ecclesiastical Institutions must be left behind us, like so many others long since passed by; and man, through thousand perils, will fare forth to his land of promise, and thence to another yet more fair!

In briefest words, this is what we want: To develope the religous faculty with the same freedom as the intellectual in science, literature, and business. This must be done individually—each one by himself seeking inspiration from the soul of the world, the infinite father, infinite mother; and socially not less—men coming together to quicken each other as iron sharpeneth iron—for the genius of one man, one woman, will kindle ten, yea, ten million, and, at last, the world of men, as a single candle will light a thousand if tipped itself with fire. We must avoid the Roman error—not count a church infallible; the German error—not worship a book; the mistake of the whole Christian sect, who take Jesus of Nazareth for a finality—as Master, not Servant, sacrifice the development of the race to reverence one great lofty man, and worship as God what they should love as a brother, and as men should have long since outgrown. Thus only shall we get the good of the Catholic and Protestant churches, of the Hebrew and the Christian Bible; thus only learn the life of Jesus—come to God as he came, face to face, with no mediator, nor need of attorneys and go-betweens. Who shall plead to God for me? doth not he know? Though a prodigal, come back from riotous living, my substance spent, shoved away by swine from their husks which I would fain fill myself withal, shame-faced and sorrow-stained, conscious that I am not worthy to be called a son, asking only a servant's bread, I know that the Infinite Father sees me a great way off, and the Infinite Mother will fall on my neck, enfolding me to the all-bounteous bosom whence I came. Yea, my elder brothers shall take part in the joy over one sinner that repents, because the lost is found again and the dead come home alive!

These are the ideas which will be written on the banner of some future church, and borne as the oriflamme of

nations of progressive friends marching out of Egypt to lands of promise ever new:—There is a God of infinite perfection,—perfectly powerful, wise, just, loving, and holy —the perfect cause and providence of all that is; He creates from a perfect motive, of perfect material, for a perfect purpose, as a perfect means; the absolute religion is the service of this God by the normal use, discipline, and development of every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit, and all power which we possess. We may make a paradise of peaceful industry, and find an immortal Eden too.

Friends and brethren! this day is a marked one in my life. Fourteen years ago, the 19th of May, 1841, I preached an Ordination Sermon in Boston—"A Discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Christianity." It was the first "Ordination Sermon" I ever preached; the first separate document I ever published with my own name. It cost me my reputation in the "Christian Church;" even the Unitarian ministers, who are themselves reckoned but the tail of heresy, denounced me as "no Christian," an "Infidel." They did what they could to effect my ruin —denied me all friendly intercourse, dropped me from committees of their liberal college, in public places refused my hand extended as before in friendly salutation; mocked at me in their solemn meetings; struck my name out of their Almanac—the only Unitarian form of excommunication,—and in every journal, almost every pulpit, denounced the young man who thought the God who creates earth and heaven had never spoken miraculously in Hebrew words bidding Abraham kill his only son and burn him for a sacrifice, and that Jesus of Nazareth was not a finality in the historical development of mankind. Scarce a Protestant meeting-house in America, not a single theological newspaper, I think, but blew its trumpet with notes of alarm and denunciation. Behold! said they, behold a minister thinking for himself afresh on religion! actually thinking! and believing his thoughts! and telling his own convictions! He tells us God is not dead! that the Bible is not his last word; that he inspires men now as much as ever,—even more so. Surely this man is an "Infidel," a "Deist," nay, an "Atheist." Down with

him! Nay, one venerable orthodox minister, still living, published a letter calling on the authorities of the commonwealth to send this young "blasphemer" to the State's prison for three years, according to law in such case made and provided!

So went it with ministers—and at Boston. Some of them were honest—theology had blinded their eyes. But other men and women gathered about me, a few at first—some of them ministers—upheld my hands and strengthened my heart, and in their consciousness I saw reflected the facts of my own. Now there are thousands, and voices from distant lands, speaking with other tongues, come o'er the sea with words of lofty cheer. No man in his day of trial had ever heartier, nobler friends—women and men.

Since that, my first attempt, I have had no part in any such ecclesiastical ceremony for fourteen years. Now you, all strangers to my voice, have asked me to come more than three hundred miles to rejoice with progressive friends in the first opening of this new commodious house. The lines have fallen to you in pleasant places. May the spirit of God filling houses made with hands, and transcending the heaven of heavens, dwell with you and bless you for ever and ever. May you

> ——————"aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
> To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
> All strength, all terror, single or in bands,
> That ever was put forth in personal form;
> Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir
> Of shouting angels, and the empyreal thrones—
> Them pass you unalarmed. Not chaos, not
> The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
> Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
> By help of dreams, can breed such hopes and awe
> As fall upon us often when we look
> Into our minds—into the mind of man."
>
> "Beauty—a living presence of the earth
> Surpassing the most fair ideal forms
> Which craft of delicate spirits hath composed
> From earth's materials—waits upon your steps;
> Pitches your tents before you as you move,
> An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves
> Elysian, fortunate fields—like those of old
> Sought in th' Atlantic main—why should they be
> A history only of departed things,
> Or a mere fiction of what never was?
> For the discerning intellect of man,
> When wedded to this goodly universe

In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple produce of the common day.
—I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
Of this great consummation; and by words
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures."

"May your life
Express the image of a better time,
More wise desires and simpler manners; nurse
Your heart in genuine freedom:—all pure thoughts
Be with you; so shall your unfailing love
Guide, and support, and cheer you to the end."

What an admirable opportunity to build up new Ecclesiastical Institutions—with the idea of the infinite perfection of God, and absolute religion, the natural service of the actual God, normal life the sacrament! Here is complete freedom to think as we will, and build our human fabric never so high: no law of man forbids. How intelligent are the men of all these Northern States; the women the best instructed in the world. What is elsewhere not common, temperance and industry, the body's piety, insures us bread. No foreign foe affrights; at home no tyrant sucks the nation's strength and lies a night-mare on her breast. And how firm are the wide foundations of the democratic commonwealth! How swiftly riches accumulate! What material beauty adorns the affluent land. The wind is not freer than the mind to think, and speak with iron lips, and lightning for its tongue. There are five-and-twenty millions of men, one-fortieth of the world's great family, cradled in a single nest. Oh that there were a church to brood them with not unworthy wings, warm them with sentiments of love and trust in God, feed them with truth, and lead them forth a joyous flock to occupy the land with blessed human life.

What opportunities—and what a waste of them! Has any nation more deserved rebuke? A democracy, and every eighth man a slave! Jesus the God of the church, and not a sect that dares call slavery a sin! The most prominent sects defending it as "patriarchal," even "Christian." Shame on us; the actual Jesus of history we have forgot, worshipping only the fictitious Christ, not Hebrew Mary's Son! There are thirty thousand ministers

in the land; what if they all preached natural religion—piety, morality,—and natural theology, the philosophy of that religion! What a world it would soon become! There are more than forty thousand congregations in the one-and-thirty States; what if they all were penetrated with the idea of God's infinite perfection—his perfect power, wisdom, justice, holiness, and love; sought normal inspiration from the soul of all, in whom we live, and move, and have our being; who lives, and moves, and has his being in the world of matter and of mind, yet far transcending both—and served Him by aspirations after great, magnanimous, and manly life! One day it will be so—and these great truths will, like the early light, move around the world waking a morning psalm of beauty in the material heaven above and earth beneath; and from all animated things, and chief of all from spiritual man, persuading forth a conscious hymn of adoration, thanks, and trust, and love, wherein, with well-accordant voice, island shall call to island, and continent respond to continent, and mortal with the immortal go quiring on the eternal and aspiring harmony!

"Nearer, my God, to Thee!
Nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be
A cross that raiseth me,
Still all my song shall be,—
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!"

A FALSE AND TRUE REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

A SERMON DELIVERED AT MUSIC HALL, BOSTON, ON SUNDAY, APRIL 4, 1858.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. —Matt. ix. 36.

Sunday before last I spoke of the false ecclesiastic idea of God, and of its insufficiency to satisfy the wants of science and of religion. Last Sunday I treated of the true philosophic idea of God, and its sufficiency to satisfy the wants of science and of religion. To-day I ask your attention to some thoughts on a false and true revival of religion. The subject is a great one—both of present and lasting importance. I cannot dispose of it in a single sermon, so to-day I shall treat mainly of the false, and show what various deeds and doctrines are set down to the name of religion, and what present methods are used for the revival of something under that name; while next Sunday I hope to speak of the true, and to show what are the real religious wants of the community to-day, and the proper way of satisfying them.

If you go to the shop of an apothecary and general druggist, you find some thousand jars, vases, bottles, gallipots, drawers, and boxes, all labelled with strange technical names, which you seldom hear except from doctors, druggists, and their patients. A painful and unwholesome smell pervades the place. You feel stifled, and not quite safe. On the counter, under the show glass, you notice fearful-looking knives, forceps, pincers, and other uneasy tools of polished steel. You ask the pale,

unwholesome-looking young man, who is prematurely bald, and spectacled besides, but kindly and benevolent in his face, what is in all those vessels. "O, that is medicine. It is all medicine." "But what is it good for?" "Why it is to make sick men sound, and keep well men so." "What are these things under the glass." "They are surgical instruments, sir, to remove teeth, limbs, and help men out of the many ills that flesh is heir to." "Are they of any use?" "Of any use? Of course they are. You don't think I would sell them if they were not? Life would not be safe, sir, without these drugs and instruments." "Then," says the visitor, "I will have some medicine and tools. Put me up enough to do my business." "Yes; but we have all kinds, for this is a general druggery: we have Allopathic, Homœopathic, Thompsonian, Indian, and Eclectic. There is no medicine, sir, in the four quarters of the globe, that we have not got it here. What will you have?" "O, I don't care. It is all medicine—all good, you say. Give me some of the best." "But," says the thoughtful apothecar,, "you must discriminate. Most of these things would kill a well man. Some are good for one disease, some for another. You must not take all the doctors' stuff in the world; because it is called medicine. Take a pinch of this and you are a dead man; a little of that, and you will be a fool all the rest of your life. That saw and tourniquet are to amputate limbs withal. I don't think you want to cut off one of your own legs, do you? You must consider what kind of medicine you need before you take any, and when you use it, do so with the greatest discretion."

Well, it is with ministers' stuff as with doctors' stuff. There is a whole shop full of deeds and doctrines labelled "Religion;" and when a minister, in his technical way, tells a young man, or an old one, "You must have religion, or you will perish everlastingly," it is much as when a doctor tells the sick man, "you must have medicine, or else die." In the one case, I want to know *what* medicine; in the other, *what* religion. There is some little difference, I think, between oatmeal and strychnine, though they are both called medicine; and there is no less difference between various things called religion.

One is bread—the bread of life; the other poison—the poison of death.

Look first a moment at some deeds which are called religion. (I will not go out from the Christian and Hebrew church.) I go back three or four thousand years, and I find an old man—more than seventy years old—standing by a pile of split wood, with a brand of fire beside him; he lays hold of his little son with one hand, and grasps a large crooked knife with the other. "What are you going to do with the boy, and with that knife?" I ask. "I am going to kill and then burn him on that pile of split wood, as an offering to God." "What do you do that for?" "Why, it is religion. Only three days ago, God said to me, 'Abraham, take thou thine only son, and offer him a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell thee of.' This is one of the grandest acts of my life. Glory to God, who demands the sacrifice of my only boy!"

Next I come down two hundred years, and I find an old man sitting still on a rough seat, out of doors, with a mob of furious men close beside him. They have just killed one of their countrymen;—stoned him to death. His body lies there, life hardly extinct, the mangled flesh yet warm and quivering. "Why did you kill this man?" I ask. And seventy elders, bearded to the girdle, exclaim at once. "Why, he picked up sticks Saturday afternoon? Would you let a man live who gathered firewood on Saturday—the seventh day—when God himself rested from his work, and was refreshed? Why, it was an act of religion to kill such a wretch. God himself told us, in good Hebrew speech, 'that man shall die the death outside the camp. The congregation shall stone him with stones.' Glory to God!"

I come down a little further, and I find a Hebrew filibuster, with an army of men more savage than the Camanche Indians. He has just conquered a territory, killed thirty-one kings, burned all their cities, killing the men, the women, and the children. He smote them with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed them. He left none to breathe. Temple and tower went to the ground. He butchered men by the hundred thousand. Their cities yet smoke with fire. The blackened corpses

left there strew the sand; the horses they have houghed crawl around and bite the ground moistened with human blood, in the slow agonies of starvation to which they were doomed. "What is all this for?" I ask. And Joshua, the son of Nun, answers, "It is an act of religion. We have the commandment of God. He told me in Hebrew words, 'Hough the horses, destroy the towns, kill the men, kill the women, kill the children, kill the babes newly born.' These are descendants of Canaan, whom God cursed. Glory to God!" And all the fillibustering army lift up their Hebrew voices and cry, "Glory to God!" with one terrific shout.

Next, I make a long stride, and I find a knot of Roman soldiers surrounding a young man whom they have nailed to a cross. His head has fallen to one side—he is just dead. It is eighteen hundred and twenty-one years ago, last Thursday. A wealthy, educated looking priest stands by, very joyful, and I ask him, "Who is this man?" And he answers, "O, he is a miserable fellow from Nazareth in Galilee. His name was Jesus. Don't you see it up there?" "Why did you kill him? Was he a murderer?" "A murderer! Murder was nothing to his crime." "Was he a kidnapper? A deceitful politician, who got office and abused it for the people's harm? Or a hypocritical priest, who thought one thing in his study, and proclaimed just the opposite in the temple?" "O no! He was an infidel. He said religion was nothing but piety and morality; or, as he called it, loving God and your neighbour as yourselves. He said man was greater than the Sabbath, more than this temple, and that religion would save a man, without burning the blood of goats, and bulls, and sheep. Besides, he spoke against the priesthood—against us, and said we would compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he had done it, we had made him twice as much a child of hell as ourselves." "Was there no other way to deal with such a man?" asks the visitor. "We tried to argue him down, but it was of no use. He beat us in every argument before the accursed people, who know not the law; and the more we abused him, the more would the silly people flock after him, revere him, and love him. Why, he said we were graves, that appear not, and men stumble into them;

that we devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers. There was no answering such things; so we scourged him half to death with rods, and then nailed him up there. We have fixed him now!" "How did he live?" "Like the infidel he was; trusting in his own goodness and piety for salvation. He tried to teach the people to trust in their piety and in their good works. He told a most absurd story about that poor fool who fell among thieves going from Jerusalem to Jericho; and then said that one of the priests went by—it was me he meant—and passed him on the other side. But I was in a great hurry. I had to be in Jerusalem to attend a prayer-meeting, and I could not attend to the man. Then he told a story of an old fellow, who kept a tavern at Samaria—nobody ever heard of him before—jogging along on his donkey, who saw the poor fellow, and turned in there (he had nothing else to do), set him on his own beast, and took care of him. He represented that as a good act, which was pleasing to Almighty God. Then he told a story of the last judgment, that God would take into heaven those who had been kind to poor fellows on earth, and would send the other way those who had trusted in sacrifices, prayers, and the like. But he was a miserable fellow. He would have ruined the nation. Why, he told men to forgive their enemies, and to love those who hate them. It was contrary to the sacred books, Moses never did so, nor Joshua, nor Samuel, nor David. There was no such thing in all the volumes of our law." "How did he die?" "Die? He died like a dog. No whine from him. Not a word of penitence; not a tear; no confession that he was an infidel. Why, almost his last words were a miserable blaspheming prayer against us,—'Father, forgive them (he meant us), for they know not what they do.' Why, to crucify such a man was an act of religion. Look here!"—And then he lifts up his garments, and on his phylactery (a piece of parchment) he has got the whole thirteenth chapter of the book of Deuteronomy written out. "Don't you see, it commands us to treat such a man just so! Glory to God!"

I come a little further down, and in a crowded room at Corinth, some five and twenty years after,—stifling, hot, unwholesome,—I find some fourscore earnest, devoted-

looking men and women met together. Three or four are talking gibberish, foaming at the mouth. The room is full of jabber. One is interpreting, in Greek, the noise another is making, in no language at all. They seem half-crazy. "What is all this?" I ask. "O," says an intellectual-looking man, sitting there as chairman of the meeting, "it is religion. These men are miraculously inspired. They speak with tongues which no man can understand except he be inspired. Sister Eunice, who lies there struck down by God, has just made a revelation in an unknown tongue, and brother Bartholomeus, with the foam on his beard, is now explaining what it means. That the world will end in a few days, and we shall be caught up to the third heavens, and shall judge angels. It is the latter days, and is the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, that young men should see visions and old men dream dreams, and God put his spirit on all. The blood of the crucified will wash all our sins away." After he has made this explanation, the chairman reads a letter to the little company of men and women, from a remote city, asking for new missionaries, and telling that those who went a year before have been put to most excruciating tortures and to death; and he asks, "Who will go?" And there stand up twenty men and women, who say, "Send us! Let us go! for we count it all joy to suffer where our Lord and Master suffered before." So, in spite of the fanaticism and violence that is in them, I see there is in those rude and humble people such a spirit of religion and self-sacrifice as the world had almost never seen.

I come down a little further, a hundred and twenty years later, to a town in southern France, and I find a Roman magistrate has just beheaded a whole family of Christians—sons, daughters, father, mother. Friends are just removing the dead bodies, while the edile slaves shovel up the saw-dust, saturated with blood, and wash the foul spots clean from the pavement. "What have these people done?" I ask. And the Prætor answers, "O, they are some of the new sect of Atheists, called Christians. They would not worship Mars, nor offer sacrifices to Jupiter. They worshipped one Christ, who was crucified by Pontius Pilate, and who, they declare, is

the actual God, and will one day judge all mankind." "But were they bad men?" "O, no, the best people in the whole town of Lyons—poor, earnest, devoted, kindly, sober people. They did no immoral act. They were the most benevolent men in the province. They left the little property they had to the poor of their company—they called it a church." "How did they die?" "They died, even the children. with the courage of a Roman soldier, but the gentleness of a Greek woman. But you know we must support the public worship of the state. We must not allow any change in religion, else we are ruined. This is an act of religion, which the gods command. Glory to the immortal gods!"

I come down still further to the same city of Lyons, to the anniversary of that same day—the day of the martyrdom of the celebrated martyrs of Lyons,—and I find a body of Catholic priests and bishops, with the help of the civil magistrates, with ecclesiastic ceremonies, psalms, prayers, and Scriptures, have just tortured a young woman to death, amid the plaudits of a great crowd. They held up her baby to her before they lit the tormenting fire, and said, "Repent, and your baby shall be yours," and she said, "No, I cannot;" and they dashed its brains against the stones of the street. "What has the young mother done?" I ask. The bishops reply, "She denied the infallibility of the Pope and of the Roman church. She declared that Mary, the blessed Virgin, was not the mother of God, the blessed Creator, and for such hideous blasphemy, we have just burned her in the name of the holy Catholic church of Christ, on the very day of the martyrs of Lyons. It is an act of religion. Don't look astonished. Did not God command Abraham to sacrifice Isaac? Did not God command Moses to stone to death a man who picked up sticks on Saturday? Did not God command Joshua to butcher millions of Canaanites? Glory to God and His blessed mother!"

I make another step, and come a little nearer our own time—the 27th of October, 1553. I find a company of Swiss preachers and magistrates burning a Spanish doctor outside the gate of Geneva. "Has he poisoned any man?" I ask. And John Calvin,—a pale thin man, with a very intellectual face, says, "Sir, he did worse than that—he

denied the Trinity. He said Jesus Christ was not God. He declared that babies dying unsprinkled by a priest, would not be damned everlastingly. I set the magistrates on him, and we have just burned him, in the name of God and the Protestant church of Christ. Glory be to the triune God, and to the Saviour of men—the Prince of Peace!"

I come still nearer—I come down to New England. It is Tuesday, the first of June, 1660. The magistrates of Massachusetts—peaked hats on their heads, broad ruffles at their necks—have just hanged a woman on Boston common; a handsome woman, a milliner, a wife and mother also. Her dead body is swinging in the wind, hanging from one of the branches of yonder elm,—standing still. "Why did you kill her?" I ask of the Rev. John Norton—a tall, gaunt, harsh-looking minister, on a white horse, with a scholar's eyes, and the face of a hangman,—Geneva bands on his neck, a wig on his head,—the man who seemed more interested in the proceeding than any other one of the company. "Why did you do this?" "She was a Quaker. She said that magistrates had no right over the consciences of men; that God made revelations now as much as ever, and was just as near to George Fox as to Moses and Paul, and just as near to her as to Jesus Christ; that priests had no right to bind and loose; that we should call no man master on earth; that sprinkling water on a baby's face did it no good, and gave no pleasure to God. Besides, she said war was wicked, and that woman had just as much right as man; and when we bade her hold her peace, she impudently declared that she had as good a right to publish her opinions as we had to publish ours. So we hanged her by the neck, in the name of God and of the Puritan church of New England. It is an act of religion. Glory to God, and the vine he has planted here in the wilderness!"

I come down still further. It is the same Boston,—the month of March, 1858. Saturday afternoon, in a meeting-house, I find men and women met together for prayer and conference;—honest-looking men, and respectable—I meet them every day in the street. Most exciting speeches are made, exciting stories are told, exciting hymns are sung, fanatical prayers are put up. Half the assembly seem a

little beside themselves, out of their understanding, more out of their conscience, still more out of their affections. One says, "The Lord is in Chicago; a great revival of religion is going on there." Another says, "O, the Lord is in Boston; he is pouring out his Spirit here." Appeals are made to fear. "Come to Christ! There is an eternal hell for you if you do not come; an eternal heaven if you will. Come to Christ! Choose now; you may never have another opportunity. 'This night thy soul shall be required of thee.'" Prayers are made for individual men, now designated by description, then by name. One obnoxious minister is singled out, and set up as a mark to be prayed at, and the petitioners riddle that target as they will. One minister asks God to convert him, and if he cannot do that, to remove him out of the way, and let his influence die with him. Another asks God to go into his study this very afternoon, and confound him, so that he shall not be able to finish the sermon—which had been writ five days before; or else meet him the next day in his pulpit, and confound him so that he shall not be able to speak. Another prays that God will put a hook into that man's jaws so that he cannot preach. Yet another, with the spirit of commerce in him, asks God to dissuade the people from listening to this offender, and induce them to leave that house and come up and fill this. I ask a grave, decent-looking, educated minister, "What is all this?" The answer is, "Why, it is an act of religion. The Lord is in Boston; he inspires us miraculously. He has made us all of one heart, and of one mind. He hears our prayers; he gives a hearing to our petitions; he will answer our prayers; 'For the fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous man availeth much.' It is a revival of religion; it is a great revival; it goes all over the United States; even some Unitarian ministers begin to thaw, at least, to soften. The Lord is in this house, to save the people. Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men!"

One step more I take, into surroundings a little different. By the full moon-light, under yonder great elm,—where Mary Dyer was hanged on the first of June, 1660, for being a Quaker,—to answer his question, a young woman clasps a young man's hand—"Yes, we will be

one; only I fear I am not worthy; and I have loved you so long, and you did not know it." "But I began first," says the man. And then from the two hearts, now melting into one, the prayer goes up, "All thanks to thee, Father and Mother of us both, thanks for our love. O may we be faithful in our life, and in death not divided; living a religion of piety, of holiness before thee on earth: and one also at last in heaven." Was the prayer spoken, or was it only throbbed out in their inspired hearts? I do not know, God does not care; spoken or felt, it is one to Him.

The same night, in a little chamber not far off, a lone woman lays aside her work, not quite done. "I will finish that to-morrow morning before breakfast," she says, "it will be ready five hours before the wedding, and I only promised it one hour before." She looks up at the great moon walking in beauty, and silvering her little chamber, with a great star or two beside her—the little stars had been put to bed long before the moon was full. She thinks of the Infinite Soul who watches over the slumbering earth, the wakeful moon, the great stars and the little, and her own daily life. "The moon serves thee by making beauty in the night, the sun in the day, both of them heavenly bodies," quoth she, "I only an earthly body. Can I also serve by making bonnets?" And out from the great human heart, the Divine soul answers, "Not less; each in its order; the sun in his, the milliner in hers." She lays her down on her bed, her limbs full of weariness, her eyes full of sleep, her heart full of trust in that God, who fills the earth with His love, as the moon fills her window with its beauty.

In the next house, a mother has made her ready for sleep, but must have one look more, to bless her eyes with the dearest sacrament which mortal ever sees. So she goes noiselessly into their room, and looks on her little ones, lying there in their various sleep, and talks to herself:

"The dear Edith! how handsome she looks in her sleep! Wonder if I was ever half so fair at sixteen. And here is Willie, my first-born. What a blessing he will be, when dear husband comes home from that long voyage. Tall as his father; almost through College now. We

will go together, and hear him at commencement. That will be a day! Here are the twin boys nestling—York and Lancaster; two little hardy roses on one stalk. Here is baby, almost twenty-eight months old—two whole years, three months, and twenty-seven days old to-night. What a dear little blessed baby it is! Papa won't know little blossom when he comes home—no, he won't. Father in heaven! did I ever deserve such joy? Thou who givest me these lives, how shall I make them worthy of thee? How shall I myself be worthy?" And the rest of her prayer—God hears it, not I.

In the next street, hard by, are two young men. "Come," says the elder, finishing his cigar, and flinging it on the pavement, "take a glass in here, and then you will have spunk enough to go with me. What a silly fool you are! Who will ever know it? You won't be young twice. There is one of the handsomest of them now at the window." Passion burns high in the young man's heart; occasion from without leagues with desire from within; there is another son of man in his temptation. But conscience, like a sweet rose, blooms over it all, and with its fragrant beauty bids passion be still. The devil steps behind. "No, I shall not go, neither to your groggery nor to your brothel—tempt me no more!" A life is saved, and integrity not stained.

Not far off, a little company of men and women are assembled, to consult upon the welfare of mankind. "We must end slavery; we must abolish drunkenness; we must educate the people; woman must be emancipated, and made equal with man; then prostitution will end, and many another woe. War must pass away, society be constructed anew, so that creative love shall take the place of aggressive lust and repressive fear. The family, the community, the nation, the world, must be organized on justice, not on covetousness, fraud, and violence, as now; and, above all things, the ecclesiastic idea of religion must be improved. We must have a true theology, with a just idea of God, of man, of religion: and so direct aright the strongest faculty in man. What can we do to promote all this blessed revolution? This must be our service of God, and we must not let this generation pass away, until we have mended all this. No matter what it costs us.

Think what it cost our fathers, the Christian martyrs, nay, Jesus of Nazareth, to do their work! Ministers will pray against us—it will hurt nobody but themselves. Hunkers will scold—let them; we can keep our way, and our tempers beside. A few grand lives will bless this whole age, for the nations look up and ask to be guided.

The next day, one of this company, a grocer in his shop, a little covetous—a little ambitious—most men are so—finds an opportunity offering itself for a profitable fraud, and he feels the temptation—all men do. He hesitates for a moment, but he answers, "No! there is an infinite God, and I am a man, and that God's law is in me. Begone, devil!" The right is victorious.

Not far off, the same day, a poor boy in yonder divinity school writes to a friend: "There are great temptations for a young man to disown himself, and bargain for place. It is the one great lure which, in this age, is constantly before our eyes." But he says, "Get thee behind me!" keeps the integrity of his soul, and becomes "utterly indifferent to the passing criticism that besets a young man who aims at a standard of life of his own." A life of self-denial, of noble manhood, of manly triumph spreads out before him, and girds him for the work of such a life.

See what a difference between these various examples that I have given, yet are they all called religion. Some of them spring from the very highest emotions in man; some of them spring from the meanest, the cowardliest, and the most sneaking of the passions that God has given to human nature.

What an odds in the doctrines called religion! I go to the oldest church in Boston—it is called a synagogue. There the doctrine is, "salvation by circumcision and belief in the Old Testament." The worshippers have not grown an inch since the day that somebody forged the book of Daniel. I go to the next oldest church—it is called Roman Catholic. There the doctrine is, "salvation by compliance with all the ritual of the holy Catholic church, and belief in its doctrines." I go to the Trinitarian Protestant church—the next oldest. There the doctrine is, "salvation by baptism,—either the sprinkling of drops, or plunging into a pond or tub,—and belief in an ecclesiastic theology," which, though it certainly contains

great truths, is yet filled with a mass of most heinous superstition. I go away from all three to an enlightened, thoughtful man, and ask—"What doctrines, good sir, are most important to religion?" And he answers, "No doubt such as produce the manliest and most natural life: to me, the infinite perfection of God, man's fitness for his duty and his destination, immortality, the religious value of daily life. Get all the truth you can, young man; have faith in your mind, your heart, your conscience, your soul. Religion is natural, whole, human life—right feeling, right thinking, right doing, right being."

What a difference in doctrines! All the sects say, "Believe in God!" But what an odds in the God they bid you believe! One is corn, the bread of life; the other is strychnine, the poison of death. In one place God is variable, ill-natured, revengeful; he will go into a minister's study, and confound him; into a minister's pulpit, and put a hook into his jaws so that he cannot preach. That is the God of Park-street theology. In another he is the Father and Mother of all mankind, blessing the heathen, Hebrew, Catholic, Protestant, Christian, Gentile, sinner and saint: He is to be served with a life of daily duty, the normal use of every faculty he has given.

When I hear of a revival of religion, I always ask, what do they mean to revive? What feeling, what thinking, what doing, what being? Is it a religion that shall kill a boy; that shall stone a man to death for picking up sticks Saturday afternoon; that shall butcher a nation; crucify a prophet; talk gibberish; torture a woman for her opinion, and that opinion a true one? Or is it a religion which will make me a better man, husband, brother, father, friend; a better minister, mechanic, president, street-sweeper, king—no matter what—a better man in any form?

Just now there is a "revival of religion," so called, going on in the land. The newspapers are full of it. Crowds of men and women throng the meeting-houses. They cannot get preaching enough. The poorer the article, the more they want of it. Speeches and sermons of the most extravagant character are made. Fanatical prayers are put up. Wonderful conversions are told of. The inner-most secrets of men's and women's hearts are laid bare to

the eye of the gossip and the pen of the newspaper reporter. The whole is said to be a miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the direct interposition of God. You look a little more closely, and you find the whole thing has been carefully got up, with the utmost pains. Look at the motive. Ecclesiastic institutions decay in England and America. This is well known. The number of church members in the United States is quite small—only three and a quarter millions. There are sixteen negro slaves to thirteen church members; the slaves increase, the church members do not. For two hundred years the number was never so small a fraction of the whole people. The number of births increases rapidly; the number of baptisms falls off. Belief in the ecclesiastic theology is fading out of the popular consciousness. Men begin to say, "God is not so ugly and so devilish as the ministers paint him." Hear an orthodox sermon, and then look at this, and then ask, "Is the God of the sermon, who is going to damn this whole congregation,—and is in haste to do it,—the God who made these flowers?" [pointing to the bouquet on the desk beside him]. Look up to the heavens. Men ask that, and they say, "The minister's God is a devilish dream. The God of nature and the God of man is no such thing."

They doubt the eternal torment of mankind. A father takes his baby in his arms, and says, "If the baby dies this moment, or if he died the day he was born, are you, Dr Bunbaby, going to make me believe God will damn this child? I shall not believe it." Men see contradictions in the Bible; the best men, the wisest, see them the most clearly. In short, New England men, who are famed for common sense, are applying to religion that common sense which wrought so well in farming, fishing, manufactures, everything else. Jealous ministers seek to change this state of things. No doubt they are as honest as lawyers, grocers, real estate holders in State-street and Summer-street. They want business kept at the old stand. They have invested in ecclesiastic corporations, and wish to keep up the stock, which is badly depreciated just now.

But what will they do? They will not mend their theology—their idea of God, man, religion. They will not manufacture an article suited to the demands of enlightened

men. They cannot do it, with their ecclesiastic idea and method of making doctrines. The machinery will not do; and they say it is Divine machinery, and cannot be improved. But they want to force the old article they have got on the popular market. Once they could do so; for once ministers were commonly taken from the ablest men in the country; now, well nigh from the feeblest. Once they had the best education. Once none but ministers had any considerable literary and scientific culture. Then talent and culture on the church's side, could do the ecclesiastic work. Now it rarely happens that the minister is the best born man, or the best bred man, in his parish. In some cases there are hundreds, and in many there are ten before him. A strong woman can throw the minister, in the close wrestling of debate. He cannot argue down his opponents and reason them into a belief in his terrible idea of a God who damns babies newly born. But the minister can do something else. He controls the ecclesiastic machinery, and deals directly with the religious element in man—the strongest, and perhaps, also, the most easily moved. So he appeals to religious fear, and tries to scare men into belief of his doctrines, and membership of his church. He has no effect on great sinners, fraudulent bankers, fraudulent presidents of incorporated companies, lying governors, presidents, representatives; he has much on weak men.

Attempts at revivals are no new things—the experiment has often been tried. A few winters ago some Unitarians tried it in Boston, but they toiled all winter, and caught nothing—enclosing nothing but a few sprats and minnows, who ran out through the broad meshes of their net, before it could be hauled into their boat. Other ministers, who are the wisest and the most religious part of that valuable sect, would have nothing to do with it. Different men went in, false to their idea of theology—with the best intentions, no doubt. It was a strange spectacle, that attempt to build up the ecclesiastic Unitarian pyramid in that way! It was a worse task than that of the Israelites in Egypt—not to make bricks without straw, but with nothing else! Those men who undertook to make a hot-house of religion and force Christians under the Unitarian glass, were so cold in their religious temperament that any one of them

would chill a whole garden of cucumbers in dog days. Strike two flints together, and you get sparks of fire; from lumps of ice, you get nothing but cold splinters. Nothing came of that. Their vanity in the beginning of winter turned into vexation of spirit in spring.

The stricter sects have often tried this experiment. It is in consistency with their theological idea. You remember the efforts made last year—the prayer meetings, conference meetings, the preaching, and the talk in the newspapers. Not much came of it. Now circumstances are different. The commercial crisis last autumn broke great fortunes to fragments, ground little ones to powder, turned men out of business by thousands. Then some religious men, of all denominations, full of Christian charity, set themselves to looking after the poor. The work was well done—never better. Then to prevent the expected increase of crime, by an increased attention to justice and charity. That, too, was well done—greatly to Boston's honour. But other men would improve the opportunity to make church members, and enforce belief in the ecclesiastic theology; so they set the revival machinery in motion. That is as well known as McCormick's reaper, and need not be described. Soon as an effect is produced in New Bedford, or elsewhere, the fact is telegraphed to Boston, and other places, and the spark from one fire lights a thousand more. Men like to follow the multitude. You remember the effects of the election in Pennsylvania, in October, 1856; it turned the vote of thousands of men in the Northern States. If one company runs in battle, a whole regiment runs; if a regiment, then an army. Nay, a file of soldiers, with fife and drum, will draw a whole crowd of men and boys in the streets any day. All men are social, rude men gregarious. The means of getting up a revival are as well known as the means for getting up a mechanics' fair, a country muster, a cattle show, or a political convention. They have only to advertise in the newspapers, and say, "The Rev. Mr Great-talk is to be here to-day. He is exceedingly interesting, and has already converted men by the score or the hundred." Then they hang out their placards at the corners of the streets. It is a business operation. It reminds me of the placards of the rival clothing dealers in North-street, formerly Ann: and Park-

street church is the Oak Hall of the ecclesiastic business in slop clothing.

There is nothing more miraculous in the one case than in the other. Last year it did not succeed very well, for business was good, and men with full pockets were not to be scared with talk about hell. Now the commercial crisis makes it easy to act on men's fears. The panic in State-street, which ruined the warehouses, fills the meeting-houses to-day. If the black death raged in New Orleans, the yellow fever in Cincinnati, the plague in Philadelphia, the cholera in New York, the small-pox in Boston, the revival would be immensely greater than now. A Jesuit priest once said: "Seasons of pestilence are the harvest of ministers. Then men are susceptible to fear." Besides, you know what the newspapers have done. Last year the newspapers disgusted the public—the sensible part of the public—with the obscene details of a most unfortunate trial, for indecent and improper conduct. This year the same newspapers are crowded with gossip about the revival. The same motive was in either case. If they could turn a penny by the revival, they did it; if by adultery, they did that. They cared not from what quarter came the clean money.

Now, we are always to expect some extravagance in the action of a force so strong as this. Some good will be done by this movement. Let us do justice. 1. There are wicked men, who are only to be roused by fear. Some will be converted. The dread of hell is stronger than fear of the gallows. Some will be scared out of their ugly vice and crime. Certainly that is a good work. But it is only the men who commit the unpopular, small vices, that are converted. Such as do the heavy wickedness, those men are never converted, until they are too old for any sin except hypocrisy. Ask Mr Polk, ask Mr Clay, if you can reach into the other world, and they will tell you they understood that trick as well as all others. 2. Then there are weak men, who are not wicked, but who can be easily drawn into vice—gambling, drunkenness, licentiousness—some of them will be checked in their course, and become sober men, outwardly decorous. 3. Then there are unsettled men and women, who want a master to put his invasive, aggressive will on them, and say they shall, or they shall

not. They will find a master. It is true they will shrink and shrivel, and dry up. But they want a master, and finding one, they will grow no more, and be tormented no more. Ceasing to think, they will cease to doubt; and where they have made a solitude, they will call it the peace of Christ.

1. But the evil very far surpasses the good. Many men, well born, well educated, will turn off with disgust from real religion. They will become more selfish, more worldly, proud, heartless, hostile to every effort for human progress,—with no faith in God, none in man, none in immortality, none in conscience,—their lives devoted to the lower law. Many of them will be church members, for the actual atheist of to-day is cunninger than ever before, and entrenches himself within the church. There is no fortress like a pew against the ecclesiastic artillery. Such a revival will make more men of this stamp. They are the greatest obstacles to the community's progress. It is not drunkards, it is not thieves, it is not common brawlers, who most hinder the development of mankind. It is the sleek, comfortable men, outwardly decorous, but inwardly as rotten as a grave that is filled with the contents of a fever hospital.

2. Then, others who were brought into the churches full of zeal, full of resolution, they will be cursed by the theology they accept, and will be stunted in their mental, moral, affectional, and religious growth—most of all in their religious. For with the idea of God, that he is an ugly devil, of man, that he is a sinful worm, and of religion, that it is an unnatural belief in what reason, conscience, heart, and soul cry out against, what true, manly piety can there be? Fear takes the place of religion, and that ugly carrion crow drives off all the handsome birds of paradise, bringing the olive-branch in their beaks.

To me, in the revival itself, there is much that is encouraging. I shall speak of it next Sunday. In the conduct of it, there is much profoundly melancholy. The effect of the misconduct on the people is most deplorable. What an idea of God is offered to man! Can any one love such a God? Surely not. I do not wonder men and women go mad. The idea of Christ—what blasphemy against that noble man, who said, religion is love of God

and love of man! What an idea of religion here, and of heaven hereafter! My friends, piety is not delirium. It does not expose to the world the innermost sanctuary of man's consciousness, and make common talk out of what is too sacred for any eye but God's, and if it turn a theatre into a house of prayer, it does not turn that prayer into noise and rant, and theatric fun.

The effect on the morality of the people is not less bad. Honest industry, forgiveness, benevolence,—these are virtues not thought of in a revival. I do not hear any prayer for temperance, any prayer for education, any prayer for the emancipation of slaves, for the elevation of women, for honesty, for industry, for brotherly love; any prayers against envy, suspicion, bigotry, superstition, spiritual pride, malice, and all uncharitableness. The newspapers tell us fifty thousand are converted in a week. That is a great story, but it may be true. The revival may spread all over the land. It will make church members—not good husbands, good wives, daughters, uncles, aunts; not good shoemakers, farmers, lawyers, mechanics, merchants, labourers. It will not oppose the rum trade, nor the trade in coolies, nor the trade in African or American slaves. It will not open a school for black people south of Mason and Dixon's line. It will not break a chain, or alter a vote against the best institution in America or the world—not one. Convert the National Administration, the Supreme Court, the Senate House; nay, convert the whole administration and the democratic party to this religion, and they take a south-side view of all political wickedness. They spread slavery into Kansas; they go fillibustering against Mexico, against Cuba; they restore the African slave trade. Suppose you could convert all the merchants, all the mechanics, all the labourers of Boston, and admit them to the churches that are getting up this revival, you do not add one ounce to the virtue of the city, not one cent's worth of charity to the whole town. You weaken its intelligence, its enterprise; you deaden the piety and morality of the people. The churches need a revival. No institution in America is more corrupt than her churches. No thirty thousand men and women are so bigoted and narrow as the thirty thousand ministers. The churches—they are astern of all

other craft that keeps the intellectual sea. The people mean to have a revival of religion, just as the Italians and the French in their revolution, meant liberty, equal rights, democracy. The people mean a revival of religion; but the ministers will turn it to a revival of the ecclesiastic theology—the doctrine of the dark ages, which we ought to have cast behind us centuries ago.

A real revival of religion—it was never more needed. Why are men and women so excited now? Why do they go to the meeting-houses, and listen to doctrines that insult the common sense of mankind? They are not satisfied with their religious condition. They feel their want. "They are as sheep having no shepherd." This movement shows how strong is the religious faculty in man. In the name of democracy, politicians use the deep, patriotic feeling of the people to destroy the best institutions of America and the world; and in the name of God, ministers use this mightiest religious feeling to impose on us things yet more disastrous. Let you and me remember that religion is wholeness, not mutilation; that it is life, and not death; that it is service with every limb of this body, every faculty of this spirit; that we are not to take the world on halves with God, or on sevenths, giving him only the lesser fraction, and taking the larger ourselves: it is to spread over and consecrate the whole life, and make it divine.

Let you and me remember this. How much can we do, —a single man, a single noble woman,—with that life of natural religion! He who goes through a land and scatters blown roses may be tracked next day by their withered petals that strew the ground; but he who goes through it and scatters rose seed, a hundred years after leaves behind him a land full of fragrance and beauty for his monument, and as a heritage for his daughters and his sons. So let you and me walk through life that we shall sow the seeds of piety and of morality, to spring up fair as these blossoms at my side, and rich as the bread which is food for all the nations of mankind.

THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION WHICH WE NEED.

A SERMON DELIVERED AT MUSIC HALL, BOSTON, ON SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 1858.

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.—MATT. v. 48.

LAST Sunday I said something of a false and true revival of religion. To-day I continue the same theme, asking your attention to some thoughts on the revival of religion which we *need*, and the *way* to bring it to pass.

In the world of man there is nothing so joyous as real natural religion. It is the centremost of all delights. Other high joys are branches, this the root they run back to, spring out of, and grow up from. I feel gratitude to many a man and woman who has helped me in my life, but to none such thankfulness as I owe my mother, my father, my sister, for the pains they took to develope this innermost of all the facts of consciousness. I cannot remember the earliest twilight of religion, when first I felt the "dayspring from on high," not even the rising of that sun which sheds such light to all my being. I trust it will not reach its noon until I have seen some four or five score years, but will rise higher, shining with more perpendicular glory, until I end my mortal life. For religion grows not old. Like God, it flourishes in perpetual youth.

I too have experienced the higher joys of life; thereof not many men know better what is great in bulk; few more what is nice and exquisite in kind. Have science, letters, success, a joy to give? I know it reasonably well. Is there joy in contending with difficulties? I have had

my part. Are there pleasures of affection? I have tasted from that golden cup, and by those I love can drink vicariously at many a spring my lips directly never touch. But dear and blessed as are all these things, I count them cheap compared with my delight in God. These I could renounce and still be blessed, at least resigned; but not to know the Father and Mother of the world, to feel shut out from that causal and providential love, which creates all from itself, I should go mad and die at once, or live a maimed, brutal life, and perish like a fool. But of this deep joy, I cannot speak save in the most general terms. 'Tis profane to talk of such things even to most intimate friends. The handsome shapes of our innermost life are chastely veiled from all the world; there I am my own high priest, and into that holy of holies none but myself and Thou, O God! can ever come.

Does not mankind also rate its religious consciousness thus high? Whom does it honour most? Always its heroes of the soul. Men with genius for religion. Such men as Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, they are above all human names. None else have such millions bowing thereto; none others are worshipped so as gods. How thankful we are to whoever brings religious truths! Mankind is loyal, and when it sees its king, takes him to its heart and honours him for ever. Thankful to those who helped us, with what sympathy do we look on persons trying to attain religious excellence! No romance is so attractive to us all as the story of a man longing after God and seeking rest for the soul. How do you and I, seeing such, wish to go to this child crying in the darkness, wet and numb with cold, and like a great Saint Christopher to take him on our shoulders and thus ferry him across the stream, warming his limbs while we bear him wrapped in our mantle, and then put a candle in his lantern and bread in his pouch and bid him "God speed you, my brother! You will find day by and by."

When a great truth stirs the feelings infinite within us, how do we love to show the cause thereof to other men, and set slips from the tree of life in their gardens to make a new paradise! Worldly ambition is singular—for itself alone; the passion of love is dual—for him and her; but the affection of religion is universal-plural, embracing God

and all his world within rejoicing arms. Nothing is so socializing as piety: my Father and my Mother, they are also yours.

No man is complete without the culture of the religious element; no high faculty perfect without help from that. I see great naturalists without it, great politicians, great artists; not great *men*. Nay, their special science, politics, art, is less philosophic, statesmanlike, æsthetic, for lack of this wholeness and thorough health within the man's interior. The notes of music, ground out on a hand-organ in the street, tell me if their composer had ever listened to the quiring of these birds of paradise.

There is a story—perhaps some of you never heard it, —that out of Parian stone a great Christian artist in the dark ages, once carved a statue of the Virgin Mary—the church's ideal woman. It was transcendent of mortality, angelic, disdainful of earth, fit only for the devotional delights of heaven, not womanly duty on earth, and sympathy with suffering and sinful men. He wrought so fair that Phidias and Praxiteles and many a heathen more who knew the wondrous art to transfigure marble into life, through their open graves came back from heaven to look thereon; and filled with joy at this new type of womanhood, so different from the Aphrodites and Athenas, so free alike from sensual taint and oligarchic pride of intellect and power, with their cold, dumb, visionary mouths, they kissed the plastic hand which wrought the wondrous work. But Mary herself—no queenly virgin transcending earth, but peasant Joseph's honest wife and natural mother of his boy—came also back from her heavenly transfiguration. Well pleased she looked thereon, but was not quite content, loving the natural woman of humanity, a carpenter's wife and mother to boys and girls in Nazareth, more than she loved a non-human, transcendental virgin of the church's creed, fit only for heavenly joy; and so she put a live branch of Hebrew lilies, sweet as these New England violets, wet with dew, into the statue's folded hand. Fair were they as the marble, but living flowers, which grew out of the hard black ground, and bore their seed within them, to fill the earth with future loveliness. And this piece of actual nature, surpassing the sculptor's art, so criticised his dreamy stone, that when he woke and saw it

there, he felt rebuked and took the heavenly hint, and ever after fashioned his Madonnas complete women, of nobler and more actual shape—not monsters, virgins of the sky, but women, sisters, wives, mothers, for the world of time, the mortal earthly beauty kept and made more fair and human by its wholeness and its complete and perfect trust in the dear God who fashioned woman's body and inspired her soul. And as the sign that such dear divinity yet touched the common ground, he put the emblematic lilies in the statue's folded hand.

So when I see a man, else grand and beautiful, with transcendent mind and conscience and affections too, but lacking this ultimate finish of religion, I long to plant therein the soul of piety, which shall complete the whole and so make perfect every part—mastering the world of time, but not disdaining it.

I have heard of many conversions,—here is the story of a real one. A man was a drunkard, noisy, violent; he beat his wife and children, nay, his mother. Crossing yonder bridge one dark night, all at once his own conscience spoke in him—"Stop there, Richard! Drink no more!" Not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, he stopped, and swore to drink no more. He became a new man. There was a revival of religion in him,—at least a part of it; ever after he had temperance, the piety of the flesh. Some of *you* understand that conversion. To speak as ministers—Jacob wrestles with the devil all night, flings him, and goes off conqueror, the devil down, and the man up for all time. Honour to conversions of this stamp!

What a joy it would be if there could come to pass a real revival of religion, of piety and morality, in the church of America—I mean among the thirty thousand Protestant ministers and the thirty hundred thousand Protestant church members;—a revival of religion which should be qualitatively nice and quantitatively large,—a great, new growth of the soul; such a healthy bloom of piety as would make a White-Sunday all over the land, prophetic of whole Messianic harvests of piety and morality, which were to come! Why, if such a thing were to take place, and I were Governor of Massachusetts or President of the United States, though it were seed-time, or harvest-time, war-time even, I would issue my pro-

clamation for a day of thanksgiving and praise to the dear God who had given such gifts unto men. I would ask the people to come together in their meeting-houses, look each other in the face, take each other by the hand, embrace, and sing their songs of praise to the Infinite Father and Mother, whose kingdom had come on earth, and was shining as the sun from east to west. I would call on great orators for choicest speech; on the poets, "blest with the vision and the faculty divine" and furnished with "the accomplishment of verse," to sing the high song and canticles of joy,—the great psalm of glorifying praise to him who is power, wisdom, justice, love. Nay, I would send my ambassadors to the nations of the earth, saying, "Come and rejoice with me, for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost, and is found." Nay, if such a movement went on in England, France, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, I would ask you to spare me for awhile, and would strike work to-morrow, that I might go and sacrament my eyes with the sight of the happy people that is in such a case. I would learn how that great salvation was brought about, and fetch home in my garments the Promethean seed of that fire, to kindle a flame all over this land.

Only think of it! a revival of piety, a new power of love to God, and love for all His laws, writ in the flesh and spirit, mind and conscience, heart and soul, and a consequent love of morality—the will and conscience going side by side, like Caleb and Joshua, bringing home such clusters from the promised land; an increase of intellect, power of use, power of beauty, power of truth; a great growth of economy, industry, riches; the heaven of chaste love,—passion and affection going hand in hand, taking sweet counsel together, and walking to the house of God in company; the growth of justice, humanity, charity. Only think of it! Forts turned into pleasure-grounds; all training-fields "converted" into public gardens; ships of war the penny-posters of the deep; arsenals changed to museums; jails become hospitals; not a gallows in America; slavery all ended—black slavery, white slavery; no murder; no theft; prostitution gone; no bestial lust anywhere, but human love for ever; poverty ended; drunkenness all banished; no staggering in the street; not an

Irishman drunk,—not even a member of Congress; no kidnapper between the seas; no liar in the chair of governor or broker; rulers that love the people, enacting justice; ministers teaching them the truths of nature and of human consciousness—proclaiming the real live God, who inspires men to-day, as He dresses these roses in their sweet cloth of gold. Think of a revival of religion such as that, which was bringing that about, which would do it in a hundred years or a thousand! Why, what were all the previous great triumphs of mankind to that? What were the conquests of fire, iron, the invention of ships, letters, powder, the compass, the printing press, the steam engine, telegraph, ether? What were the discovery of America, the English Revolution, the American, the French? Nay, what were these six great historic forms of religion—Brahminic, Hebraistic, Classic, Buddhistic, Christian, Mahommedan—they would be what February and March are to May, July, September, and October; what a few weeks of thaw are to a whole summer of flowers and an autumn full of fruit. Why, the very sympathizing sun might pause in his course and gladden his eyes; and the stars of heaven, which have seen their image reflected back in a looking-glass of human blood, might stop and join in that primal mythic psalm, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, to all good willing men."

How much we need a real revival of religion! Not a renewal of ecclesiastic theology, but a revival of piety and morality in men's hearts.

The people *feel* this need; hence we turn off to look at all new things in religion. We are tired of that old stack of hard, dry, meadow hay, where the Christian herd has so long sought fodder, and been filled with the east wind. We long for the green pastures and sweet grass along the streams which run among the hills; hence we wish to leap over or crawl under or crowd through the bars of this old winter cowyard of the church, and at least get out of that unwholesome pen and go somewhere, with God to guide us, though we know not whither.

See the growth of Mormonism. Even that has something which mankind needs; else men, and especially women, would not cross the sea three thousand miles

wide, and then travel three thousand more by river or by land for its sake. The success of Mormonism is a terrible protest against the enforced celibacy of millions of marriageable women, and the worse than celibacy of so many who are called married, but are not. Fifteen years ago "Spiritualism" was two women making mysterious noises in Rochester, New York. Now it is I know not how many millions of persons, some of them thoughtful, many hungering after God. "Spiritualism" had something to offer which the churches could not give. Nothing comes of nothing; every something has a cause. This very revival, foolish as is the conduct of it, selfish as are the managers who pull the strings,—with the people it indicates a profound discontent in the dull death of our churches. God created man a living soul, and he continues such only by feeding on every word which freshly proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The old bibles did for those who wrote them; the old creeds for such as believed. We want the help of the old bibles, the inspiration of the new bibles, ever proceeding from God, who freshly fills the old stars in heaven, and creates new flowers every spring on earth.

I say the people feel this need; but the need itself is greater and deeper than the popular consciousness thereof. We do not know how sick we are. Look at the chaotic state of things in America, which is but like the rest of Christendom. First, there is war. Fenced with a two-fold oceanic ditch, from two to seven thousand miles wide, we yet spend more than thirty millions of dollars every year to hire fighting men, in a time of profound peace; and not one of them fixes bayonet to do mankind good.

Next consider the character of the Federal Government —it is the last place to which you would look for common honesty, for justice to our own nation; just now it is a vulture which eats the nation's vitals out; only the strong giant grows faster than this administration can tear off and swallow down. Men tell us human life is more safe in Constantinople, in Damascus, in Samarcand, in Timbuctoo, than it is in Washington. We are told that we have three murders a fortnight in the capital of the United States, all the session through. The Government is so busy fillibustering against Cuba, Mexico, Central America,

planting slavery in Kansas, that it cannot protect the lives of its own Congress men in its own capital.

Next look at slavery. Every seventh man is property —a negro slave; and our Supreme Court says coloured people have no rights which we are bound to respect. The Government seeks to spread this blot across the continent, from east to west, from south to north—asks five thousand new soldiers to do it with. A new State knocks at the door seeking to join the sisterhood of freedom; the Government says, "You shall not come in free; with bondsmen you may enter."

Fourth: Look at the antagonistic character of our civilization. So much poverty in the midst of so much riches —so many idlers in so much industry. How many children in prudent, wealthy, charitable Boston, cannot go to school in winter from lack of clothes! See what fortunes are dishonestly made by men who are only the fillibusters of commerce, robbers in a peaceful way! Our industry even now is a war of business—it is competition, not co-operation. How much power is lost in the friction of our social machinery. There are savages in our civilization. In the south, many of them are slaves—in the north, they are free, but still savages. A black sea of crime lashes the white houses of wealth and comfort, where science, literature, virtue, and piety together dwell.

Fifth: Look at the condition of woman. There is no conscious antagonism betwixt men and women; each doubtless unconsciously aims to be more than fair to the other; but nowhere has woman her natural right. In the market, the state, the church, she is not counted the equal of man. Hence come monstrous evils—prostitution, dependence, lack of individual character, enforced celibacy, not more grateful to maid than to man, meant for neither him nor her; and hence come those marriages which are worse than celibacy itself.

These are the five great evils of mankind to-day, whence many lesser ones proceed—drunkenness, crime in its thousand forms. I do not speak to scold mankind, still less to scold America. In all respects save one, we have the best institutions in the world; and certainly, the human race had never so glorious a welfare as to-day. These evils, they were never before so small. History, it is not

a retreat backwards, it is progress forth, upwards, on. These things are not a finality; they are to man's attainable condition what stumbling is to walking, stammering to speech, the boy's clumsy, mistaken scrawl to the clear current writing of the man. We are to outlearn these five evils—war, wicked government, slavery, selfish antagonism in society, the degradation of woman. We shall outgrow these things. God has given us the fittest of all possible means for attaining the end. One of the mightiest of man's helpers is this religious faculty in us; this, nothing else, can give us strength to do that work.

The business of the farmer is to organize the vegetative force of the ground, and raise thence the substances which shall feed and clothe mankind. The mechanic is to organize the force of metals, wood, fire, earth, water, lightning, air, and thereby shape the material things necessary to human needs—to feed, clothe, house, and heal mankind; corn he must turn to bread, cotton and wool to cloth, the clay, the forest, the rock, to houses; poison to medicine. The philosopher is to translate the facts of nature, from matter into mind, making them into thoughts, ideas of consciousness; then to show us how to use the powers of nature for the farmer's and mechanic's work. The statesman is to organize the nation's power, its matter and its mind, its bodily force, its wealth, intelligence, justice, love, charity, religion, so that men shall live in peace together at home, with peace abroad, having security for the person, the substance of manhood; and for property, the accident of manhood; so that each shall help all, and all enjoy the special genius God gives to each.

It is the business of the minister to waken, quicken, strengthen, and guide the religious faculty, and so gain for us a great general power to help the individual man in his development of body and of spirit. But man is social. The individual alone is a wild man; it is only in society that noble individualism is instantially possible. While these five evils just named continue, individual men will be as now. It is in the great social mill that men are made what they are. Here and there may be one so born, that society cannot shape, bleach, or dye him. He takes no form or colour, save from his mother's bosom; he has an impenetrable genius from his birth, plastic to mould

others, not pliant, to be shaped or dyed. But in ninety-nine hundredths of our character most men are what society makes them. Compare Old England and New England, the children of Cove Place with the children of Beacon-street, to see the truth of this, the power of circumstances over the soul.

It is the minister's business not only to waken, strengthen, and quicken the religious power, and point to this end, but also to diffuse the ideas which shall mould society, so that it can rear noble men, with all their natural powers developed well.

The minister is the teacher of the church; not a master; a servant to teach. A normal church is a body of men, assembling to promote religion, piety, and morality. Its business is, first, protective at home—to promote piety and morality in its own members; and, second, it is diffusive abroad—to promote piety and morality in all the world according to its strength: for duty is proportionate to power to do; and where the power is little, so is the duty, where much, there great. So a church must protest against all wrong which it knows to be wrong; promote all right which it knows to be right. It is a church for that very purpose, and nothing less. The minister is to help do that work; to lead in it. He must be in advance of mankind in what pertains to religion—to all religion, individual, social. Else he cannot teach; he is no minister to work and serve, only an idler to be worked for and ministered unto.

No doubt there must be primary churches, to teach the A B C of religion, and ministers fit for that work of nursing babies; and also academic and collegiate churches, and ministers for that grand function. Let neither despise the other. So, then, the function of a real church of religion will be partly critical, to war against the wrong, partly creative, to show us the right and guide us thither, at least thither-ward.

We have thirty thousand Protestant ministers in the United States, supported at the public charge, and to do this very work, for so the people mean. They are not rich; are not rich men's sons. As a class, they have an education which is costly, even where it is not precious; which is often paid for directly by the people's work. All

education is thus paid for indirectly, for in that money all human accounts are at last settled, in the great clearing-house of mankind. Work is the only coin which is current the world over. Therein do you pay for the murders which are committed at Washington, and for the angels of mercy, who in Boston carry your beneficence from house to house, and take unlawful babies newly born, and set them in religious homes, to grow up to nobleness. In that coin we pay for all things,—the minister's education amongst others. The ministers come mainly from that class of people who are most affected by religious emotions and ideas, where human sympathies are the strongest. They seldom are borne by the miserably poor, or the ruinously rich. They have two advantages: birth in the middle class, where they touch the ground and touch the sky; and superior culture above that class. Add to this, moreover, they commonly enter the ministry with good motives, more self-denial than self-indulgence; they are usually free from gross vices, the crimes of passion; they are the most charitable of alms-giving men; they have the best opportunities to teach the churches, and to help promote the critical and creative function which belongs thereto.

But now, alas! taken as a class, they do no such thing,—they attempt none such. They do not count it their business to remove any one of those five great social evils, and so enable society to raise up noble individual men. Nay, they seldom take much pains to remove the lesser evils which have leaked out from those five great tubs of malarious poison. Let the prayers of the Protestant churches be answered to-night; let all the white men and women in the United States be converted to the ecclesiastic theology which is taught in orthodox meeting-houses; let the conversion take in all the babies who know their right hand from their left—suppose there are fifteen millions who are "brought under," and "bowed down," as they properly call it, and made to believe in the creeds of the revival ministers; let all these be added to the church next Sunday, and take their communion of baker's bread and grocer's wine,—it would not abate one of those five great evils—war, political corruption, slavery, selfish antagonism in society, nor the degradation of woman! Such

a conversion is not a step towards removing any one of these evils—nay, it is a step away from that work. Such a conversion would entail inferiority on a woman; retard the progress of civilization, the moralization of mankind; add to the fetters of the slave; strengthen the tyrant's hand; increase the chances of prospective war, and add to its horrors when it broke out. For it would bless all these iniquities in the name of God, and justify them out of the Old Testament and the New—it is quite easy to do so. Nay, suppose you should convert the three millions of African slaves over ten years old, not one of them would dare thereafter to run away from his master, or strike that master down. Such conversions would unman the negro slave!

Why is all this? Two months ago I spoke of the false method of theology. The Christian church has followed that method, and while teaching many truths and doing very great service to mankind—which I should be the last to deny—it has made three monstrous errors. Here they are.

First, it has a false conception of God;—its God is a devil, who means damnation.

Second, it has a false conception of man;—its man is a worm, who is religiously good for nothing; the "natural man" fit only for damnation.

Third, it has a false conception of religion;—its religion is to save men from hell, and it is fit only for that. But it does not even that for more than one out of a thousand; for the other nine hundred and ninety-nine it is absolutely good for nothing on earth or beneath it; and the one saved is not borne to heaven on mighty wings of piety and morality, fanning the thin, cold air of the world, but by the magic-miracle of the atonement, which turns off God's wrath, and carries man into eternal joy which he has done nothing to merit and to earn.

These ideas are the minister's tools to work with. I am not scolding him, only stating facts. Poor man! he is far more to be pitied than blamed. He sees a vast amount of evil in the world, and thinks it all a finality; it is God's will and His decree that it shall last for ever. The evil cannot be removed here and now,—it is in the nature of things; and even in the next life it will never be dimin-

ished to all eternity. Man cannot remove it; God will not; for He loves none but church members, who believe the church theology; He will ruin all else;—and damned for once is damned for evermore.

Hence ministers in churches do not make it a principal thing to try and remove these evils, to develope man's nature, to set the religious faculty, that greatest river of God, to turn the mills of society. They aim chiefly to remove unbelief in ecclesiastical doctrines, to admit men to the church, to save their souls from the wrath of God by belief in the magic of atonement. "No man," say they, "goes into heaven for his religion, for any merit of his own; with a whole life of piety and morality, ended in the cruelest martyrdom, he cannot buy a ticket of entrance;" while a moment's belief in the ecclesiastic theology, and joining of a church, will admit a pirate, a kidnapper, a deceitful politician who curses a nation, or a hypocritical priest—it will admit them all to heaven—each man as a "dead-head."

Do you doubt that the churches of America count not manly religious character and life, but only theological belief, as the one thing needful?—then look at these two facts.

First, the Protestant churches of America have one great corporation—the Tract Society—wherein many sects work together. The aim is theological—to enforce ecclesiastic doctrines;—it is not religious—to promote love to God, and the keeping of his natural laws writ in the very constitution of man. So the Tract Society protests against none of the great evils I have named. It attacks no popular wickedness; it would save men from the fancied wrath of God by faith in Christ; not by virtue and wisdom save them from actual ignorance, superstition, covetousness, drunkenness, dishonesty. It would save men *in* their sins hereafter, not *from* their sins to-day and here. It has little to say against war, political oppression, slavery, the antagonism of society, the degradation of woman. Even the Bible Society, in which all sects unite, dares not give the New Testament to a single slave, though the American Anti-Slavery Society offer them five thousand dollars if they will spend it thus. Spite of its profession, spite of its good intention, the church is baptized worldli-

ness, professing the ecclesiastical theology as magical means of salvation from the future consequences of a life of wickedness below!

That is the first thing. Next, many Christian ministers think they can tease God to do what they want done; that they can get Him to convert men, and if the prayers of the churches centre on one man, he presently "caves in." Now, at a revival meeting, who is prayed for, prayed at, prayed against? The ecclesiastical archers do not draw their bow at a venture; it is with good aim. What Saint Sebastian is there who is stuck full of the arrows of Calvinistic imprecation? Is it the sly, corrupt politician? the "democrat" who hates democracy, but under its covert seeks to ruin the people? No; he is orthodox in profession, though atheistic in his public practice and private creed. Is it the able lawyer, who prostitutes his grand talents to bring the most miserable culprit safe from the justice of the law? No; Sunday after Sunday he sits in an orthodox meeting-house, and requires no conversion. Is it the capitalist who rents his shops for drunkeries and gambling dens, his houses for brothels? No; he is sound in the faith. Is it the merchant who trades in coolies? No; he is a church member, painted with the proper stripe. Is it the doctor of divinity who defends slavery as a divine institution? Not at all; he believes in the damnation of Unitarians, Universalists, and babies not wet with baptism; he needs no repentance. Is it the trader whose word is good for nothing, who will always take you in? No; he is out in the street pimping for the prayer-meetings of his sect. Is it the man who sends rum and gunpowder to the negroes of Africa, and fills his ship with slaves for Cuba, half of them cast shrieking to the hungry waves before it touches land? Oh no; he contributes to the Tract Society. Do men pray for the President of the United States, that in his grand position, with his magnificent opportunities, he may secure to all men the "unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?"—may take the golden rule of this blessed New Testament and make that a mete-wand for the American Government? They ask no such thing. Do they pray that our Supreme Court may "do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with its God?" They pray for

no such men; and those they do pray for, they ask only that they may believe the creed, and "come to Christ." To Jesus of Nazareth? It does not mean to come to him who said religion was love to God and love to man! It means only, come to the catechism and the meeting-house!

I do not know how many men, and women too, have laboured with me to convert me. Not one ever asked me to increase in religion, in either part of it—in piety or morality; to be more temperate, industrious, truth-telling—quite the opposite of that—more generous, just, charitable, philanthropic, forgiving to my enemies. Not one ever asked me to be a better minister, scholar, neighbour, friend, cousin, uncle, brother, husband. None ever prayed me to love God better, or to keep his commandments more, only to "come to Christ;" and their Christ, it was the catechism, which tormented me in my infancy, which I sobbed over many a night and wept myself to sleep, and at last made way with the abominable thing, trod it under my feet for ever, before I had seen my seventh birth-day. I do not know how many letter-writers, clergymen, laymen, and lay-women visitors, have threatened me with eternal damnation. This one is sure I am to have it at last; these others declare it is coming "summarily." No one ever charged me with any vice, with any lack of virtue or manly excellence; only with disbelief in the catechism. That is the second thing.

These two things show that the church asks belief in the theology of unreason, not a life of natural piety and morality; and because the ministers work for this, and with tools suited to this end, is it that so many of them pass their lives

> "In dropping buckets into empty wells,
> And growing old in drawing nothing up."

These things being so, ecclesiastical revivals do no considerable good. They make superstitious church members, not religious men and women. "They heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly"—I mean, they do not heal it at all.

> "They skin and film the ulcerous place,
> While rank corruption, mining all within,
> Infects unseen."

What is the great obstacle to the liberation of France, Spain, Italy? It is the Roman church; and if every Frenchman was a member of the Roman church, and believed its creed, France might give up the ghost to-morrow—it would never be free.

What is the great obstacle to the improvement of Catholics in America? It is the Catholic church; and just in proportion as an Irishman is wedded to that church, just so do I despair of him. In a less degree our Protestant theology is working a similar harm for us.

I believe in a revival of religion. There have been several great movements thereto. Not to go out of the Hebrew and Christian church, there are several well known to all of you. That of Moses, Jesus, Luther, the Puritans, the Quakers, the Baptists, the Methodists, Unitarians, Universalists, and the Spiritualists. How were they brought about? In each case, there was a new theologic idea by a man of genius, or a new application of an old one by a man of talent. Moses taught the people—"There is one God for the Hebrews, to be served by ritual sacrifices in one place." Jesus declared—"There is one God for all mankind, to be served by brotherly love. The walls of nationality are broke down." Luther taught,—"The infallible Bible is superior to a deceitful Pope. There is freedom of conscience for all men; they are justified by faith in Christ, not by the ritual of Roman priests. Each people must manage its own church affairs." The Puritans declared—"Each church must manage its own affairs, the Bible its only law." The Baptists declared—"Grown men must be baptized all over. No man goes into heaven dry-shod; the priest must wet him from heel to crown. He that believeth and is *immersed*, shall be saved." The Quaker said—The Holy Ghost *in* the soul is more than the letter of Scripture *out* of it. Man is free;—not bound by his father's ordinances. Woman is man's equal. The prayer that God hears is in the heart; He needs no words to understand it." The Methodist said—"the Gospel is for the poor and the ignorant," and carried it thither. Unitarians and Universalists declared—"God is one, not three. He damns nobody for ever; hates nobody at all. All men shall land in heaven at last, no matter howsoever badly shipwrecked; if they sink, it is to another sea."

The Spiritualists say—"The Bible is not a finality; it is no man's master, it is every man's servant. We, as well as the old prophets, can have communion with the departed. Christ reveals himself directly to us, as much as to Paul and Silas, Peter and James."

Now, in all these cases, there was a new idea; not always a true one, but one which stirred men's souls and called forth religious emotions. What energy did religious truths give the followers of Jesus! What power there was in the early Puritans, Baptists, Quakers, Methodists, mixed with folly! Of course you expect that in all religious movements. What a spread have the doctrines of Universalists and Unitarians had in eighty years! In 1778, I think there were not ten thousand men in all America who believed the distinctive doctrine of Unitarians and Universalists—the ultimate salvation of all men. Now, how wide is the doctrine spread! How rapidly Spiritualism has gone abroad! yet it has no great man in its ranks, not a philosopher, not a scholar.

When a great religious idea comes new to any man, what enthusiasm it stirs us to! The followers of Jesus did not comprehend his glorious gospel of piety and morality; they thought more of the man than of his doctrine, his life. They made him a God. "Salvation by Christ" was their creed. The idea was new; and though it was false, it was yet a great improvement over Hebraism and heathenism of that time. It made a new organization of its own, which covered all Europe with churches. But the vigorous life which once dwelt in the soil of Christendom, and threw up that ecclesiastical flora, and made those handsome shapes of stone fragrant with the beauty of devotion, it is now all gone. The fossil remains of that religious vegetation tell how mighty the life must have been. What was the state's king before the church's bishop? The Pope put his foot on the neck of emperors, for he had the religion of Christendom to back him. It is not so now, even in Europe. There is no more new religious life in Saint Peter's church at Rome, than in the pyramids of Egypt. Unburied dead men are in one, buried dead men in the other. So far as new thought is concerned, the Pope is only a mummy.

We want a revival of religion in the American church

which shall be to the church what the religion of Jesus was to heathenism and Judaism, which, though useful once, in his day had served out their time, and had no more that they could do. We do not want a religion hierarchically organized, which shall generate nothing but meeting-houses made of stone, and end at last in a priesthood. We want a religion democratically organized, generating great political, social, domestic institutions, and ending in a world full of noble men and women, all their faculties developed well, they serving God with that love which casts out fear.

How can we stir that element to emotions fit for such a work? Only by a theology which shall meet the people's want, a natural and just idea of man, of God, of the relation between them—of religion, life, duty, destination on earth and in heaven; a theology which has its evidences in the world of matter,—all science God's testimony thereto; and in the world of consciousness,—every man bearing within him the "lively oracles" the present witness of his God, his duty and destination. No sect has such a theology; no great sect aims at such, or the life it leads to. The Spiritualists are the only sect that looks forward, and has new fire on its hearth; they alone emancipate themselves from the Bible and the theology of the church, while they also seek to keep the precious truths of the Bible, and all the good things of the church. But even they—I say this modestly; they are a new sect, and everybody wars against them; my criticism I give for their good, in the spirit of hope and tenderness—even they are rapping on coffin lids, listening for ghosts, seeking God and God's truth *beyond* human nature, not *in* human nature. Their religion is wonder more than life; not principally addressing itself to the understanding, the imagination, the reason, the conscience, the soul, but to marvellousness more than aught besides. So with many it is amazement, and not elevation. But its function is to destroy the belief in miracles; it will help set many men free from the idols of the old theologic den;—no small service, even if it set up new ones of its own; because new they will be less dangerous. I also give thanks for "Spiritualism," and am not surprised at the follies and extravagances, the dishonesty of "mediums," which I

partly see and partly hear of. You must always allow for casualties. You cannot transfer a people from an old theology to a new one without some breakage and other harm and loss. This is attendant on all human operations. When about to build a meeting-house in the country, of old time, all the town's people came together, on a summer day, for the raising. The village brawlers was there, idle boys, loungers, wrestlers, boxers. There was drinking, and swearing now and then. Many got a little hot with liquor. Now and then a spike-pole got crippled, two or three straw hats "perished everlastingly." Some brother was overtaken in a fault, and carried home boozy. But they pinned down the ridge-pole with shouting; all summer long the building was getting forward, the steeple grew up at last out from the tower it was rooted in; and in the autumn there was a harvest of people gathered within its walls, and generation after generation men went up there for prayers, and holy vows of noble life. Let us always make allowance for casualties, for extravagance, in the old which is fixed, in the new which will become so. What extravagances had the Quakers once, the Christians in Paul's time!

I say, we want a revival of religion, such as the world has not seen, yet often longed for. It was the dream even of the Hebrew prophets, looking for the time when the nations should learn war no more, when the sword should be turned into the ploughshare, the spear to the pruning-hook, when all men should be taught of God, when "Holiness unto the Lord" should be on the bells even of the horses. We want a piety so deep that men shall understand God made man from a perfect motive, of perfect material, for a perfect purpose, and endowed with faculties which are perfect means to that end; so deep, that we shall trust the natural law He writes on the body and in the soul. We want a morality so wide and firm, that men shall make the constitution of the universe the common law of all mankind; every day God's day,—life-time not to be let out to us at the sevenths or the seventieths, the larger fraction for wickedness, the lesser for piety and heaven, but the whole of it His, and the whole of it ours also, because we use it all as He meant it, for our good. Then the dwelling-house, the market-house, the court-

house, the senate-house, the shop, the ship, the field, the forest, the mine, shall be a temple where the psalm and prayer of religion goes up from daily, normal, blessed work.

Manly, natural religion—it is not joining a church; it is not to believe a creed—Hebrew, Christian, Catholic, Protestant, Trinitarian, Unitarian, Nothingarian. It is not to keep Sunday idle; to attend meeting; to be wet with water; to read the Bible; to offer prayers in words; to take bread and wine in the meeting-house. I know men who do all these things, and yet give scarce more evidence of piety and morality than the benches where they sit,—wood resting on wood. Other men I know who do none of these things, and are yet amongst the most religious of God's children. Such things may help you,—then use them, in God's name, if you find it so. They may hinder,—then, in God's name, cast them off. Jesus of Nazareth was no Christian, in the ecclesiastical sense of that abused word; and could he come to Boston to-day, and bear the same relation to America in the nineteenth century that he did to Palestine in the first, he might not be crucified, or stoned dead in the streets, because the laws forbid such outrage now; but in the "conference-meeting of business men," the prayer-meetings of the grimmer sects, the revivalists, men and women too, would beseech God to convert him from the wicked belief that his own religion would save his own soul, that our Father in heaven was effectually to be served by justice and love to his children; and if God could not do that they would pray—"Remove him out of the way, and let his influence *die with him.*" I say those things are not religion; helps or hindrances they may be. Religion itself is something far more inward and living. It is loving God with all your understanding and your heart and soul. It is service of God with every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit, every power he has given you, every day of your life. That religion, it is a terror to evil-doers, yet offers them encouragement to repent; it is an inspiration to whose would love man and love God. Suppose I am converted to such a religion; the sunlight of this idea falls on me for the first time, kindling emotions which spring up as the green grass after April rains. What a

change will it make in my landscape! Suppose I have kept a drunkery or a brothel. Then I cast off my sin and labour to restore what before I had thrown down, and in cleanness of new life make mankind and myself amends for my past wickedness.

I carry my religion into my daily work, whatever it may be. I am a street-sweeper, then my piety will come out in my faithful performance of duty. No drunkenness, profanity, obscenity, hereafter. The faces of my wife and children will be the certificate of my conversion, of my baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire. My character will be the sign that I belong to the true church of God.

I am a young school-mistress, perplexed in my business—all young people are, be their business what it may. Then my religion will appear in the discretion, in the sweetness of temper, the forbearance, with which I feed the little unruly flock, and pasture them on learning. I am President of the United States, when this thought of religion comes to me, and I change my wickedness, and seek with my vast powers to do that justice to my brother men which I wish them, with their humble ones, to do to me.

If a minister is filled with this religion, it will not let him rest. He must speak, whether men hear or whether they forbear. No fear can scare, no bribe can charm, no friends can coax him down. The church, the state, the world oppose him, all in vain. "Get thee behind me," he quietly says; and while Satan goes from this other son of man in his triumph, angels come and minister to him. He may have small talents; it matters not. The new power of his religious idea comes into him, and one such man "can chase a thousand, and two ten thousand put to flight." Nay, he gets inspiration from God. He makes the axis of his little glass parallel with the axis of God, and the perpendicular Deity shines through with concentrated light and heat.

What if there were one such minister in each of the three hundred and seventy towns of this State—what a revival would they make in Massachusetts! What an increase of economy, industry, riches! What a growth of temperance, education, justice, love, in all its forms,—filial, friendly, related, connubial, parental, patriotic, phi-

lanthropic love! What if all the thirty thousand Protestant ministers, and the two thousand Catholic priests, in the United States, had such religion—worked with such theological ideas of man, God, duty, destination! There would never be another war, staining America with blood; filibustering would be impossible; political oppression, it would not continue a week, the people would not choose a magistrate in the day time whom they must hire watchers to sit up and look after all night, lest he do mischief; a wicked ruler would be as impossible as a ghost in the day time. Slavery would end before the fourth of July, and on Independence day, the mayor of the city might tell the rear-admiral of the Turks, "My dear sir, we are converted, and as good as African Mahommedans, and there is not a slave in all the United States. Boston has become almost as Christian as Tunis or Algiers!" What a change would come over the structure of society! Co-operative industry would take the place of selfish antagonism. How would that flower of womanhood expand with fairer, sweeter, and more prophetic bloom! How would the nation's wealth increase! What education of all—what welfare now, what progress for the future! What a generation of sons and daughters would this people raise up! Ay, what missionaries should we send abroad, not to preach ignorance to the heathen, who have enough of it already, but to carry the light of the gospel of life to the nations that "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death!"

Such a revival of religion—it is possible; one day it will be actual. The ideal in my heart is a prophecy of the real in mankind's actual life. At length the best must be; this is as sure as that God is good. But this revival will not come by miracle. God does his part by creating us with faculties fit for this glorious destination; by providing us in the material world, the best means to achieve that destination and get this development. To use these powers and opportunities, it is not God's work, it is yours and mine. There never was a miracle, there never will be. Trust me, what God for once makes right, he will never unmake into wrong.

This revival of religion will not come by prayer of words, although the thirty thousand Protestant ministers and the

two thousand Catholic go down on their knees together. In 1620, our Puritan fathers wished to have all New England ploughed up and made fit for farms. Suppose they had gone down on their knees and asked God to do it? Not a furrow would have been turned to-day, not a plough-share forged or cast. A few weeks ago, London men wanted the Great Eastern launched. What if all the English clergy, Episcopal, Dissenters, had put up prayers in the meeting-houses petitioning God to do this work, and the Queen and Parliament had knelt down on their knees in supplication, saying,—"Have mercy upon us, O Lord! miserable offenders. There is no health in us. We beseech Thee to launch her, good Lord!" They might have prayed till they were black in the face, the vessel would not stir an inch. But they used the natural means God gave them. The thinkers prayed great scientific thoughts—they prayed steam-engines and hydraulic-rams. The labourers prayed work—they prayed with levers, and windlasses, and coal-fire. With sore toil, the hydraulic-rams sweat through their iron skin, twelve inches thick; and the launch took place. Mind gave his right arm to Matter, and Miss Leviathan, on her marriage day, coy, timid, reluctant, walked with him to the water, and they became one. Ere long they will take a whole town's population, a wealth of merchandise, and swim the Atlantic together, breast to breast, stroke after stroke, three thousand miles in a week!

Prayer, the devout helpmeet of work, is the brave man's encouragement, when struggling after perfection. But prayer as a substitute for work—not a wife, to glad the toil and halve the rest, but a witch, to do by magic miracle—that is blasphemy against the true God—sterile and contemptible.

Ministers talk of a "revival of religion in answer to prayer!" It will no more come than the submarine telegraph from Europe to America. It is the effectual fervent *work* of a righteous man that availeth much—his head-work and hand-work. Gossiping before God, tattling mere words, asking him to do my duty, that is not prayer. I also believe in prayer from the innermost of my heart, else must I renounce my manhood and the Godhood above and about me. I also believe in prayer. It is the upspringing of my soul to meet the Eternal, and thereby I seek to alter

and improve myself, not Thee, O Thou Unchangeable, who art perfect from the beginning. Then I mingle my soul with the Infinite Presence. I am ashamed of my wickedness, my cowardice, sloth, fear. New strength comes into me of its own accord, as the sunlight to these flowers which open their little cups. Then I find that he that goeth forth even weeping, bearing this precious seed of prayer, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, and bring his sheaves with him!

This revival will not come all at once, as the lightning shineth from the east to the west, but as the morning comes, little by little: so will it be welcomed too. As that material day-spring from on high comes grateful to grass and trees, to men and women, so will this revival come upon our hearts, as natural consequence of such prayer and manly toil—our toilsome prayer, our prayerful toil. It will come as the agriculture of New England came—one little field made ready this year, another next—the Indian corn growing triumphant amid the black stumps of the oaken forest which the axe had hewn down and the fire had swept away, the savage looking grimly on, no longer meditating war, but yet wondering at the apples which litter the ground with the ruddy loveliness of unwonted, unexpected health. It is coming already:—the peace-men, the temperance-men, anti-slavery men, educational men, the men of science, poetic men, the reform-men, men of commerce, manufactures, agriculture—every good man, every good woman—all these are helps to it, each digging up and planting his little plot of ground. Good ministers of all denominations—Catholic, Protestant, Trinitarian, Unitarian, Methodist, Baptist, Quaker, Universalist, Spiritualist,—there are thousands of them, are toiling after that great end, even though they know it not. Many have done something, some much,—one man more than any. His name is not honoured in the *churches*—of course not! Was Jesus, in the Temple? They cast him out even from the synagogue. There is a scholarly man in New England gifted with such genius for literature as no other American has ever shown. He has large power of intuitive perception of the beautiful, the true, the just, the good, the holy; cultivated singularly well, having the poetic power of pictured speech, not less that the inward eye to see.

His life is heroic as a soldier's; he never runs, nor hides, nor stoops, nor stands aside to avoid the shot which hits tall marks: yet is no woman gentler than this unflinching man. He was cradled in the church—it is good for a cradle, not a college, shop, or house. He was bred in the ministry, and sat at famous feet. The little town of Concord is the centre of his sphere; its circumference,—that great circle lies far off, hid underneath the foreign horizon of future centuries.

I honour the Chaunceys, the Mayhews, the Freemans, the Buckminsters, the Channings, who taught great truths, and also lived full of nobleness; I thank God for their words, which come directly, or echoed, to your heart and mine. They have gone to their reward. But no living man has done so much as Emerson to waken this religion in the great Saxon heart of the Americans and Britons. It is not doctrine he teaches—his own creed is not well defined; it is the inspiration of manliness that he imparts. He has never beguiled a man or unsuspecting maid to join a church, to underwrite another's creed, or comply with an alien ritual. But his words and his life charm earnest men with such natural religion as makes them, of their own accord, to trust the Great Soul of all, and refine themselves into noble, normal, individual life. In six hours of so many recent weeks, I think he has done more to promote the revival of piety and morality in Boston, than all the noisy rant of Calvinistic preaching, Calvinistic singing, and Calvinistic prayer in the last six months.

What an opportunity there is for you and me to work in this true revival! No nation offers a field so fair. We can speak and listen, we can print and read, with none to molest or make us afraid. More than all that, we can live as high as we please. There is no government, no church, to lay its iron hands on our heads and say—"Stop there!" Misguiding ministers may believe in the damnation of babies newly born, may pray curses on us all; they cannot light a fagot to burn a man: their spirit is willing, but their flesh is weak! It is a grand age and nation to live in and work for.

The first thing that you and I want is to be religious in this sense—to know the Infinite God, who is perfect power, perfect wisdom, perfect justice, perfect holiness,

and perfect love. Knowing Him, you cannot fail to love with your understanding and your heart, to love His world about us, within us, and all His laws. The warmth and moisture of the ground, they come out in the grass and in the trees, in the beauty and the fragrance of these violets, in this rose which, "beside his sweetness, is a cure;" and so your and my piety must blossom in our service of God with every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit—the normal use of every power and opportunity we have, Sundays, Mondays, all time.

Then daily work shall be a gospel, life our continual transfiguration to a nobler growth. We shall bless our town, our nation, our age, our race. When we die, we shall leave the world better because we have lived, with more welfare now, fitter for progress hereafter. We shall bear away with us the triumphant result of every trial, every duty, every effort, every tear, every prayer, every suffering, nay, of each longing aspiration after excellence. And there and then the motherly hand of God shall be reached out over us, and we shall hear the blessed word—"Come, my beloved, thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into thy Mother's joy!"

FALSE AND TRUE THEOLOGY.

A SERMON DELIVERED AT MUSIC HALL, BOSTON, ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1858.

But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.—MATT. xv. 9.

I ASK your attention to some thoughts on the ecclesiastical and the philosophical methods of studying theology.

The religious is the strongest of all our spiritual faculties. This is shown not only by the wide spread and long duration of particular forms of religion, like Buddhism, Christianity, Mahometanism, embracing different nations, and even races, or by the monuments which these have left in all peopled space and all civilized time; but also by the ease with which it puts down the great passions of the body, and still more by the power which it has to overmaster the mind, the conscience, and the affections of man, and to subdue the great interests of civilization.

If this mighty faculty be directed according to its nature, it works the highest welfare and secures the most rapid progress, the most elevated civilization to the individual, the nation, and to mankind; but if it be misdirected against its nature, it hinders the progressive development of man's faculties, and leads to the most terrible ruin of the individual and the nation. It will help man, or else hinder him, and that with a force proportionate to the vast power of the faculty itself.

We all live by eating and drinking; the normal appetite inclines mankind as a whole to the proper articles of food and drink suited to the climate and the stage of civilization;

but the appetite may be perverted and misdirect the individual, so that he eats and drinks things not fit for him, or uses them in excessive quantity, and is poisoned by what should feed him. Look about you at the terrible examples of each form of error,—gluttons who have "eaten their own heads off," thinking no more than the swine they feed upon and resemble; drunkards who have drowned themselves in the Red Sea of their own debauchery, the Pharaohs of intemperance, their nobler faculties strangled long before their flesh is cold! The religious faculty—call it soul—may err as much as the appetite for food, and the mistake produce consequences not less hideous on the individual and the nation. A church may poison the soul with foul doctrines as easily as a grog shop may poison the body with foul drink.

The animals are all unprogressive in their character; but little room is left them for individual will or reflection. Their action is almost all spontaneous, instinctive, compulsory of their organization, not free of their individual personality. Hence they are tools of a power which works through them, rather than agents acting on their own account. So they do not err in choice of food or drink, or mode of conduct. If an individual does so, no tribe of animals ever makes that mistake. They grow no wiser by experiment, they suffer from none, for they try none. But God has made man—within certain and somewhat narrow limits—his own master. We are progressive, and must make experiments in the art of life. Instinct is the sole and perfect guide for the beast, representing not his thought, but God's thought for him. But man is partly ruled by instinct, which is God's thought, and partly must he rule himself by his own personal reflective will. After he gets beyond the wildness of his primitive state, the reflective action is much more than the instinctive. He makes great errors in his experiments. Individuals do so. John is a drunkard; Lewis and Margaret are dandies; both come to nothing, one but a cup of drink, the others a bundle of fine clothes. Nations likewise do so: the Swedes are a people of drunkards; the Greeks and Romans were debased by the vices of their civilization, and barbarous, half-naked men tore these effeminate dandies limb from limb.

Similar mistakes are made by individuals and by nations in the development of the religious faculty, and the consequences are worse than even drunkenness: thereof history furnishes terrible examples, on a small scale by individuals, or on a great scale by nations—Abraham sacrificing his only son, Spain butchering her subjects by the hundred thousand, because they could not believe what was unbelievable.

In mankind's religious development, as in yours and mine, three things are indispensable, namely—emotions, religious feelings, which come directly from the spontaneous action of this religious faculty itself; ideas, which come from the reflective action of the intellect; and actions, which come from the will, influenced by emotions and ideas.

These ideas are the middle term, between emotions and actions; they reach forward and create deeds, they reach backward and cause emotions, which create new deeds. The sum of ideas in religious matters is what men call theology—thoughts about God, about man, and about the relation between God and man. Now as true religion is piety, the love of God, and morality, the keeping of his laws; so a true theology is the science whereof religion is the practice—theology the intellectual part, as piety is the emotional part, and morality the practical part.

A true theology helps both piety and morality; a false theology hinders each. Now the character of the theological ideas which men attain to and believe in, will depend mainly on the method in which they seek for theologic truth: a false method will ultimately lead to a false theology and its consequences; and a true method will ultimately lead to a true theology and its consequences; the road from Boston to Salem will never carry the travellers to Roxbury, though so much nearer at hand. As the theology which is accepted has such an immense influence on the individual, the community, the nation, or the race which accepts it, you see how important it is to have a right method in theology. It is not the highest end of life to attain wealth, honour, power, fame, but to build up a religious character, noble in kind, great in quantity; to be a complete man, with a whole, sound body, developed

normally, with a whole, sound spirit, normally developed in its intellectual, its moral, its affectional, and its religious part. To a nation, I think there is no one thing which so much hinders its development as a false theology; for that chains the spirit and then drives it to an unnatural and a false church, an unnatural and false state, community, family, and so on; and there is no one thing which so much helps a nation to a masterly development as a true theology, which sets the spirit free, and then leads it to found a natural and true church, a natural and true state, community, family, and so on. This being so, it is of the utmost importance to you and me that the nation should have this true method in theology, for that is to the general activity of the people what the constitution is to its political activity, what his tools are to the blacksmith, farmer, spinner, or weaver.

As the theology determines the action of the religious faculty, and as that is the strongest faculty in man, you see at once what wide, deep, and controlling force theological ideas have on the entire concerns of men. Let me give an example. About a hundred and twenty or a hundred and thirty years ago, the Methodist sect began in England. At first it was to the British church what the Protestant Reformation was to the Roman—an awakening to new religious life, and putting that into new practical forms. It began with George Whitfield, the greatest ecclesiastical orator, and John Wesley, the greatest ecclesiastical organizer and statesman, that Christendom had seen for a thousand years. By this power to persuade and this power to organize men, did these two persons give it such a start that now the sect is some twelve millions strong, has wide influence in Great Britain and America, and has done much service in controlling the vices of passion, and in keeping the humblest, poorest, and least cared for part of the population from falling still lower down. But this sect, with its many millions, has never produced a great man, a great discoverer, organizer, administrator, philosopher, poet, or historian. It had one respectable scholar, Adam Clarke, who amassed considerable learning, though he used it without originality or good judgment. He died in 1832, and since then

no Methodist has had a European reputation. I do not know of an American Methodist, more than American Catholic, who is eminent for anything but devotion for his church. Yet there is talent enough born into the Methodist church; it affects powerfully the poorest and least educated class of men in the Northern States, who furnish able men for its preachers. When the Methodist synod met in Boston a few years ago we were astonished to see such a collection of superior heads; they would average better than any American legislature I have seen. Everybody knows what zeal, what industry, what self-denial there are in the sect. Yet little comes of all this talent, because the theology and the discipline of the sect crush all free individuality of mind, conscience, heart, and soul. Just in proportion as a man becomes thoroughly a Methodist, he ceases to be an individual man with a free mind, a free conscience, free affections, and freedom of soul; instead thereof he becomes a vulgar fraction of his sect, one twelve-millionth part of the Methodist church. Not many years since a Methodist preacher said, "We preach religion without philosophy, and that is the secret of our success." He meant that they proclaimed doctrines which must be believed without appeal to reason, and commanded deeds to be done without regard to conscience. The consequence is that men with large reason and conscience either will not enter the Methodist church at all, or if they do, they thence presently come out, or stay only to have their minds pinched to the narrowest compass, and their conscience stifled stone dead.

There is one method which has been adopted by all the Christian sects in their theological investigations. Some, like the Methodists and Catholics, and most of the Trinitarians, adhere to it with all their might; others, like the English church, the Unitarians, the Universalists, and the Lutherans, care less for it, and break away in practice from what they all profess in theory. I call this the *ecclesiastical method.*

There is another method adopted by philosophical men in their scientific investigations in these days, but rejected by all the great sects; some earnestly and violently repu-

diating it, while others reject its theory though they follow it more or less in practice. This I call the *philosophical method*.

So far as they are ecclesiastical, all theologians follow the ecclesiastical method; it is instantial with them. So far as they are philosophical, all scientific men follow the philosophical method; it is instantial with them. Let me say that when some ecclesiastical men study philosophy, they abandon the ecclesiastical method; hence men like Dr Whewell in England, and others, have attained great eminence in science, and done large service therein.

1. Let me say a word of the ecclesiastical method. This consists of an assumption and a deduction. Men assume that certain words spoken or written, are a direct, miraculous, and infallible communication from God, and therefore are of ultimate authority, for all time, in all matters of religion and theology. To these men must subordinate their intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious faculties. That is the assumption.

2. From these words certain doctrines are deduced, and enforced on men as the miraculous and infallible commands of God which must be accepted in spite of the instinctive or reflective action of man's mind, conscience, heart, and soul. These are called doctrines of "revealed religion," and men must believe them, howsoever unreasonable, immoral, unlovely, and irreligious. That is the deduction.

The Christian sects differ on many other things, but they all agree in assuming this miraculous and infallible communication from God as the ultimate authority, and in deducing thence all their doctrines; so however unlike their conclusions, all agree in their assumption and deduction. There is diversity of doctrines, but unity of method. The Catholic finds that communication in the Bible, in ecclesiastical tradition, and in the decisions of the Roman church—expressed by the infallible general council, and enforced by the infallible Pope—which three are the ultimate authority of the Catholic, all summed up and represented, however, by the infallible Pope. The Protestant finds that communication only in the Bible, which is the ultimate authority of Protestantism, and is to

him what the Pope is to the Catholic. Some Protestant sects reject the Apocrypha as no part of the miraculous communication; some individual Protestants reject certain doubtful books of the Old Testament or the New; but all the little Protestant sects, Trinitarian, Unitarian, Nullitarian, and the three great Christian sects, the Greek, the Roman, and the Teutonic churches, agree in the assumption and in the deduction. By the same method the Roman gets his infallible Pope, and the Teuton his infallible Bible, the Trinitarian his trinity, the Unitarian his unity, the Damnationalist his eternal torment, and the Salvationist the redemption of all men.

Now the Christian sects do not *prove* that the words they take as ultimate authority in matters of religion, are a divine, miraculous, and infallible communication from God; they do not prove this from facts of observation in the world without, or facts of consciousness within. That fact is assumed. In the whole compass of theological literature there is no proof of the fact; there is no evidence which would lead an impartial jury to think for a moment that there was the shadow of a proof. There is no direct evidence adequate to prove it: there is no personal evidence—the testimony of known men, carefully collected together and tested; and there is no circumstantial evidence—the testimony of known things. It is assumption, and no more. It is thought wicked to doubt what none has ever proved, and what never can be proved.

From this assumption the theologians deduce certain doctrines, and read them as mysteries, revelations, commandments, resting on God, things which must not be questioned. If you reject them you are to be damned for ever.

Look at some of the most remarkable of these ecclesiastical doctrines thus deduced. I shall not take great religious or theological truths, such as the existence of God, the immorality of man, his dependence on God and accountability to Him; for these are facts of consciousness which are common to all forms of religion, in the enlightened, the civilized, the half-civilized, the barbarous, and even the savage state, and all of these have been demonstrated, it seems to me, till the argument for each can be analyzed into propositions, each of which is self-evident,

and requires no proof. Whatever the theologians may say, none of these four great truths rest at all on the theological method for their support. I shall take seven dogmas, which are certainly no part of natural religion, and are claimed to be very important parts of the miraculous revelation. Here they are:—

1. The existence of the devil, a personal being, totally and absolutely evil, with immense power, which he uses to thwart God and ruin men.

2. The total depravity of man: the first man was created good, but fell from his innocence, and "In Adam's fall we sinned all,"—so that we are totally depraved, and the human race has turned out just as God meant it should not turn out.

3. The wrath of God: He is in a state of continual indignation against this totally depraved mankind, and is "angry with the wicked every day."

4. The eternal torment of the immortal soul: the wrathful God has prepared an everlasting hell, where the absolutely evil devil will act as his lieutenant-governor and torment sinful mankind, the immense majority of the human race, for ever.

5. The incarnation of God: God is one and yet three—the Father, who is eternally the Father; the only begotten Son, who is eternally the Son; and the Holy Ghost, who proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son. By God the Holy Ghost, God the Father—who is also God the Son and God the Holy Ghost—overshadowed Mary, the spouse of Joseph, and she bore God the Son, who was successively God a baby, God a boy, God a youth, and God a man, eating, drinking, dying, was sacrificed, raised again, and ascended to heaven, and all the time was still God.

6. The atonement, the death of God: He was killed by wicked men, and rose again, taking away the sin of part of the totally depraved mankind, through the mitigation of God's wrath, so that a certain portion are destined to eternal happiness, while the rest must go down to eternal woe, prepared for the devil and his angels.

7. The salvation of men by belief: you must believe all these six doctrines, or else perish everlastingly.

Now, there is no circumstantial, no personal evidence

for the truth of any one of these seven monstrous doctrines. You find no devil on the face of the earth to-day, no footsteps of him in the "Old Red Sandstone," not a track of his step amid all the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation;" no detective police could ever find the faintest scent of this creature. Ask the minister, "How do you know there is such a devil?" and he answers, "It is a doctrine of the divine and miraculous revelation." Ask again, "How do you *know* the revelation is divine and miraculous, from God?" and if he be an honest man, and understand his profession as well as the street sweepers their business, he will say, "I do not *know* it, I only find it convenient to *assume* it. I have not a particle of evidence for it."

Then there is no circumstantial or personal evidence for the total depravity of man. Wise men you find, none wholly wise; good men, none wholly good; bad men also, but none totally bad. Take the human race in every age, wisdom prevails over folly, goodness over badness, virtue over vice; even Lawrence, and Stone, it is thought, made more honest bargains than deceitful ones. South Carolina representatives in Congress are sober all the forenoon. Cruel masters are exceptional, even amongst slaveholders. Murderers are always in the minority; thieves and sturdy beggars likewise, and even liars. History records no fall of man, but rather an ascent, a continual increase in wisdom, justice, philanthropy, piety, and trust in God.

There is no evidence for the wrath of God, and an eternal hell; earthquakes, volcanoes, storm, pestilence, death, indicate no ugliness on God's part, no lack of love. In the world of time and space you cannot find a single fact of observation which indicates the wrath of God. Take any man, the worst or the best, who is not debauched by indulgence in the ecclesiastical theology, not poisoned by these odious doctrines, and in him you cannot find a fact of consciousness which indicates wrath on God's part. Nay, in the clear mirror of the human soul, wiped clean from the breath of that contagion, is God's infinite love reflected; the natural man looks there, and sees the dear Father and Mother of all mankind. Ask the minister how he knows of God's wrath and eternal torment; ask the council of ministers at North Woburn how they know

that God will damn all babies unbaptized and dying newly born, and if you could beguile them into honest speech, they would tell you "It rests on the authority of some one who died many years ago; we do not know who said it, nor what authority he had for saying it."

So it is with each of these other doctrines—the incarnation of God in a miraculous baby, the death of God by crucifixion, the resurrection of the dead God; the atonement, God the Son appeasing God the Father, this one undivided third part of the Trinity appeasing the two other undivided third parts. There is nothing which can be called circumstantial or personal evidence for these things; they all rest on the *said so* of somebody who knew no better than we; who took his dreams of the night or his whimseys of the day, for the facts of the universe.

In the Catholic church you will be told of the miraculous immaculate conception of Mary, the mother of God, of the miracles of St Valentine, to whom this day is consecrated, of St Dennis, who had his head cut off, and walked home with it under his arm. All this rests on the same sort of evidence as these seven dogmas just named; on the "said so" of somebody who knew nothing about it. There is no more reason for believing the miraculous birth of Jesus, the "Son of God," than of Mary the "mother of God," or of Anna, the "mother of God's mother," "the grandmother of God;" the whole rests on nothing. The Catholic church says that you must believe in the infallible Pope, and do the works which the church commands, and you shall find life everlasting; else you shall find hell everlasting. There is as much reason for that as there is for the Protestant mode of salvation; there is none at all for either.

This method leads to monstrous evils. To assume that there was such a communication from God, to submit man's highest faculties to such outside authority, in the long run, always degrades these faculties, and leads men in God's name to despise the very highest gifts He ever gave to man. The odious doctrines thus deduced drive some men to utter irreligion, even to atheism. All the way from Greek Epicurus to German Feuerbach, it is the follies taught in the name of God that have driven men to atheism. But speculative atheism is always exceptional,

rarer than murder. Multitudes of men believe these doctrines because they are taught in the name of religion—and what fear follows, what distrust of self and of man, what belittlement of all the intellectual powers! How such men turn off from fair normal life, and hope to serve God and win heaven by some unnatural trick! Go to a meeting of scientific men, who are discussing geology, physiology, what you will, and how patiently they look for facts, and examine and cross-examine every witness, to be sure they get at a real fact, not at a dream. Thence how carefully they induce the law of the facts; what respect do they show for man's mind; what fairness of investigation, what freedom from confinement to the old! Go to a meeting of ministers, discussing the science of religion, and what a difference! what sophistry in "investigation," what contempt for mind, what neglect of facts, what fear of inquiry! With them credulity is counted one of the greatest of virtues; belief without evidence or against evidence is a part of piety. To call for proof is to be a "sceptic," an "infidel." All questions must be settled by quoting texts, which represent not facts of the universe, but the opinion of some man, perhaps unknown, who died hundreds of years ago. Not only is it impossible to attain truth in this way, but this method of trying for it debases the mind, the conscience, the heart, and the soul of those who take the pains. Children who go apart to study their lessons, and come together to recite them, learn truth by this process, and strengthen their mind; but if they separate to dream, and assemble to tell their dreams, what good comes of it? Dreams for facts, stupidity for science. Alas, there are children of a larger growth! So much for the ecclesiastical method.

II. The philosophical method is just the opposite of this. It is quite simple; it rests on two assumptions. The first is the faithfulness of the human faculties, the senses for sensation, the spiritual powers for their spiritual function, intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious. The other assumption is the existence of this outward world, whereof the senses testify.

Then from facts of consciousness within, and facts of observation without, the theological inquirer seeks to

learn the nature of God, of man, and the relation between the two, with the duties, rights, and destination of man, which come therefrom. By this method the inquirer takes the whole universe as the revelation of God. The world of matter presents the phenomena of God which are manifest to the senses of man, while the world of man presents him the other phenomena of God which are manifest to the mind, the conscience, the heart, and the soul. He would learn from all the history of mankind, and gather what previous ages had learned. The human race is many thousand years old; all civilized nations have their religious books, the Bibles of the nations, writ by men of genius and piety; none contains all truth, nor only truth, but each has some, for man is always religiously inclined, always looks for the true, the beautiful, the just, the good, and the holy; and God has not made these thing hard to find, accessible to great men only, the inheritance of but a single people, a revelation only to learned men. The conscience of the child outtravels oft the conscience of the sire, and the wife intuitively knows more of God and religion than her philosophic husband ever dared to think. Each of the six great world-sects has taught much truth; I think the Christian most of all; and besides that, it has the transcendant character of Jesus—a man of such noble courage, with such abhorrence of hypocrisy, such tender love for mankind, and piety so inward, blossoming out into the "strong and flame-like flower" of such morality! The Catholic church has much to teach; every Protestant sect also a great deal. I just spoke of the Methodists, showing the evil which comes from their false method, and ecclesiastical discipline; they have a fervour of religious emotion, a zeal for the spiritual welfare of neglected *white* people, which makes them exceedingly useful.

The inquirer after religion and theology by the philosophical method will take the good which past ages have to teach. But man's nature is more than his history; so the chief source of theologic truth will be found in man himself, in the instinctive and reflective action of his faculties in their normal use and development. Men talk of inspiration, the contact of the human spirit with the infinite God, the incoming of Deity to our soul. I think it is a fact, not

miraculous and exceptional, but normal and instantial; just so far as man uses his natural faculties in their natural way, the Divine power of the universe flows into him and acts by him, as vegetative force into these handsome plants. Faithful use of the faculties is the human condition of this Divine inspiration, and truth, beauty, justice, love, integrity, these are its tests. I know there are moments of ecstacy, which are to common hours what genius is to ordinary men, what spring is to the year, and in this precious flower-time of spiritual action much is done, nor would I ever neglect these handsome opportunities; I would take every flower which was offered to me, then, but with cool, calm reason, in my soberest moments would examine it, and learn its value.

Now if a man tries this philosophical method, he will come to a true theology, which shall be to the actual facts of God's nature, man's nature, and the relation between them, what astronomy is to the facts of the solar system. The science of theology will then be based on facts of observation and of consciousness; not on mere words, which represented the dream of some deluded man, but on the facts of the universe, writ in matter without us and mind within. Then theology will be a progressive science, enlarging its scope of comprehension. Mere belief will pass into certain knowledge. From theology, as from astronomy, chemistry, medicine, miracles will disappear, and law take their place—the constant mode of operation of the natural powers which God gave to matter and to spirit. Those seven odious dogmas which I have just named will pass off. So the spectres of the night, made of tormenting dreams which disturbed the little girl who read stories of hobgoblins before she slept, are all gone when she opens her eyes, looks out of the window, and sees the apple trees unfold their fragrant, roseate beauty to some May morning's rising sun! The idea of a capricious, changeable, and wrathful God, damning men by the hundred million, paving his wide hell with the skulls of babies not a span long, their parents racked above that fiery floor—all that will vanish, and instead thereof shall your soul be gladdened by the perpetual presence of the Infinite Power, Wisdom, Justice, and Love, the Perfect God of the universe, who is present in all matter, in all spirit, acting everywhere by law, Per-

fect Cause and Perfect Providence, Father and Mother to you and me and all that are. No longer shall you dream that you are totally depraved, your nature hateful to God, you no lawful child of his, but mothered by the devil's dam, with no natural right to heaven, ruin your final fate. You shall account yourself the grandest work God has ever made, created from a perfect motive, the desire to bless, and for a perfect end, the highest welfare possible for you, and furnished with faculties which are a perfect means thereto. Then you shall not fear and crouch down, and skulk about the world like a rat in the daylight of a city street, ashamed of your nature, afraid of your instincts, emasculating your intellect, your affections, and your soul; but with upright walk shall you go about your daily life, knowing that you have duties to do, rights to enjoy, serving your God by the normal discipline, development, use, and enjoyment of every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit, every power which you possess over matter and over man. What heed will you then take to do every manly duty for its own sake, making conscience supreme, and to bear any cross laid upon you which should be borne. If you mistake and overstep the natural law of right—as you will, especially in early life—mortified with shame you will turn back to the natural and better way. Religion will not be a regeneration, being born again, a change of nature, a cutting something native off or tying something foreign on; but a development of nature, what the blossom is to the bud, what growth to manhood or womanhood is to girl or boy. Conscious of immortality, living now the everlasting life, you will look forward to that future heaven, which instinct tells even the savage of, and which science demonstrates to enlightened and thoughtful man. You are sure of the Infinite God, you have a right to his providence, and you can trust Him in all that is to come. Fear of the devil and his noisy hell of absurd and wicked torment, you will leave to such as love the hideous thought, whom you would but cannot cure; and in its place the certainty of ultimate heaven will come to you as the sure gift of the Infinite Father, the Infinite Mother, who is Cause and Providence to all the world!

When such doctrines of God, man, and the relation between them, of man's duties, rights, and destination, are

set forth and accepted, what a change will follow! Speculative atheism will be stark dead; no thoughtful man will look upon the world of matter, and deny the power, law, and mind, which are imminent therein; no thoughtful man will feel the world of spirit within him, but will also feel the consciousness of the Perfect God, and joyous turn to Him —for it is not the God of Nature that the speculative atheist would deny, but only the unreal God of theologic dreams, which science turns off from, while the Deity which all the world of matter and the world of spirit alike reveal, the scientific men draw near with love greatening continually as they know Him and approach.

What an effect will this natural theology have in making a real revival in natural religion! Conscious of such a nature in us, of such a God as Cause and Providence, of such duties, such rights, such a destination—what wealth of religious emotion will spring up within the human soul! what depth of piety, the love of God! what strength of morality, the keeping of his commands! What an influence will it have on the individual, to make him a great man, intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious; then on the family, the community, the state, the church, and the world! Then ministers and politicians will not seek to justify a well-known wrong by quoting texts from Bible, or Koran, or saint, none knows who; but out of the experience of mankind past and the consciousness of mankind present, and the actual inspiration of God now, shall both derive the unchanging higher law of truth, justice, love, and make these the statutes of mankind, till the constitution of the universe become the people's common law!

I just now spoke of the religious faculty as the strongest of all the human powers. When it works aright, what service will it render us! It is a mighty Amazon, reaching from the infinite ocean of God, far into the innermost continent of man, fed by the breath of that ocean which it tends unto. What tall mountains shall it drain; what kingdoms water; what mills and factories of human wealth shall it turn; what fleets laden with peaceful welfare shall it bear on its bosom; what cottages, palaces, villages, towns, and mighty cities, swarming with progressive, virtuous, happy men, shall be reflected in this great river of

God, which mixes their image also with the stars of heaven all the night, its varicoloured glories all the day!

A false method in science gave man astrology, alchemy, magic; a true method gives him astronomy, chemistry, the medicative and beautifying arts, mills, factories, railroads, steam engines and telegraphs, ether. A false method in politics gave him a military despotism, slavery of the Asiatic millions, crushed underneath a tyrant's bloody foot; a true method gives him an industrial democracy, the marriage of liberty to law, filling the world with happy daughters and progressive sons. A true method in theology marries the religious instinct to philosophical reflection, and they will increase and multiply, replenishing the earth, and subduing it; toil and thought shall dwell in the same household, and desire and duty go hand and hand therein.

My friends, almost thirteen years ago I came here at the request of some of you whom I see before me to-day. You asked me to preach a true method of theology, to teach the pure and absolute religion, calling no man my master, but looking to the great Master, who is also Father and Mother. It was a dark, rainy Sunday, the 16th of February, 1845. I knew I was coming to a "thirty years' war," should I live so long, and I had enlisted till the fight should be over: I did not know how terrible the contest must be; you knew it still less. You remember how the churches roared at us; only here and there some one said, "Good may come out of it, as out of another Nazareth; let us wait and see. Let both grow together till the harvest; try not to pluck up these tares, lest you also disturb the wheat." Since on the 22nd of January, 1845, you voted the resolution that it was expedient that "Theodore Parker should have a chance to be heard in Boston," a great change has taken place in the theology of New England, of all the Northern States. I think the humble labours of this little society have not been in vain. It was a great opportunity which this wide hall offered, with its open doors. There are strangers who came to scoff but depart not without having learned to pray.

My main object has never been to make a system of theology, still less to form a sect, or draw a crowd; an

ambitious Jesuit could better form a sect, any harlequin of the pulpit, who knew how to lay his hand on the religious instincts of men, could sooner draw a crowd. I have worked for a long time, in a long time. I have aimed to help men and women become what God meant we should be—noble men and women, whose prayer is the communion of their soul with God's soul, whose life is a daily service of Him, by the normal discipline, development, use, and enjoyment of every limb of the body, and every faculty of the spirit. Do I help you to this? If not, then leave me, let these handsome walls be silent, empty, deserted, lone, till some nobler one shall come who shall waken religion in your consciousness, as that great master [pointing to the statue of Beethoven] out of the common air produced such music as enchants the world. Go you elsewhere, and find you bread from heaven in whatever desert it be rained down, and fill you with living water, no matter from what rock it flows forth, nor whose hand smites open the fountain's blessed way!

But if I so instruct your mind that it fills itself with truth and beauty, if I do rouse your conscience till it see the higher law of God's unchanging right, and if I do confirm your will till that law becomes your daily guide to life, if I do touch your affections till you better love each other—the young man more purely the maiden, and she him with purer answering love, till wife and husband, parent and child, kinsfolk, friend, and acquaintance, are knit in more welcome ties, till a larger patriotism warm you with concern for the poor, the maimed, the outcast, the slave, the drunkard, the harlot, the thief, the murderer, till a larger philanthropy join you to all mankind—and if I stir the feelings infinite till your souls are informed with the living God and have an absolute trust in Him—if I help you to these grand ideas of God, of man, of the relation between them, of duty here, and right to heaven hereafter—then am I blessed in you, and you also are blessed in me, and after the years of strife shall have passed by, you and I, though all forgot, our very names perished, shall yet be a power in the nation to soothe, and heal, and bless, long after our immortal part shall have gone to those joys which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man begun to comprehend.

[FROM THE BOSTON DAILY BEE, OF MARCH 17, 1858.]

EXCESSES OF THE REVIVAL—
THEODORE PARKER'S CASE.

In an article on Saturday, we spoke in general terms of the remarkable religious interest now existing in this city and in other localities, and expressed some opinions in regard to the dangers to which such seasons of religious awakening are liable, and the blemishes which sometimes disfigure them and mar their usefulness. We had no hesitation in thus commenting publicly on this matter, since it seems to be the fashion to noise the thing abroad, and some of our contemporaries go even so far, and we think it a great deal too far, in such a case, as to parade before the public in the papers the names of the individuals who speak and pray at these meetings. At the least it may be assumed that the cause of truth and of pure and undefiled religion will receive no detriment from a little plain speaking in relation to what we call the excesses of the revival movement. There are many things incidental to these seasons of religious interest which we cannot approve; men under the influence of excitement of urgent appeals, or even admonished by an awakened conscience, make a thousand absurd statements, and equally absurd promises and prayers. They see with great distinctness the mote in their brother's eye, and fondly imagining that the beam has been cast out of their own, they seem to suppose that a brief period of unusual devotion, of increased fervour, of abandonment of ordinary duties in order to give their whole energies to the work of regenerating individual souls, will make up for years of coldness, selfishness, and neglect of God and duty—not that they are conscious of entertaining such notions, but that they do the sequel proves; they act as though personal religion and vital piety could be accomplished by the job; they forget that the injunction, "Fear God and keep His commandments," besides comprising the whole duty of man, is of binding force and constant application

in all places and for ever, and too often they seem to think that exhortations and prayers will answer in place of the fulfilment of the precept commanding to us to "do justly, love *mercy*, and walk *humbly*" before God.

They make good resolves in abundance, but forget the truthful words of the poet:

——"and *on reason* build resolve,
That column of true majesty in man."

These are some of the defects most noticeable in revivals, and we instance them not because we would in aught detract from the just merits of these religious movements, but as showing that these like all human efforts are imperfect, and hence should be carefully scrutinized and judged with candour and charity. Perhaps no mistake is more common with those most zealous in these revivals, than that of turning away their attention entirely from themselves, and exerting themselves strenuously to save the souls of their neighbours, perhaps forgetting that to his own master each one must stand or fall, or mayhap forgetting self altogether in their new and zealous benevolence for the salvation of others. At all events this extraordinary manifestation of anxiety for the spiritual welfare of others, leads to some exhibitions not at all calculated to reflect credit upon religion, or to inspire confidence in revivals, or in the sanity and common sense of some of those who participate in them. To illustrate: at many of the prayer-meetings of late, Rev. Theodore Parker has been made the subject of special prayer, and we give below some specimens of the way in which the mercy of God is implored for this somewhat eccentric but distinguished preacher. The words of these supplications were taken down by a reporter as they were uttered. One brother prayed for Mr Parker in the following language:

"O Lord, *if* this man (Parker) *is* a subject of grace, convert him and bring him into the kingdom of thy dear Son: but if he is beyond the reach of the saving influence of the gospel, *remove* him out of the way, and let his influence *die with him!*"

Now, is this that spirit which instructs us to "pray for all men everywhere!" Is this "lifting up holy hands without *wrath* or *doubting?*" Did this Christian mean to ask God to kill Theodore Parker, or would he have the only other possible interpretation put upon his petition,

namely, that God would "remove" Mr Parker to some other locality, so that some other community might be subjected to the influence of his preaching and example, baneful as the supplicant evidently thinks it is? Upon one horn or the other of this dilemma must this prayer be hung, and in either view it is as unchristian as it is absurd. Another prayed thus:

"O Lord, if this man will still persist in speaking in public, induce the people to leave him and come and fill this house instead of that!"

Who gave the preacher and brethren of the —— street church a monopoly of free speech, of prayer, or of exhortation, that they should pray God to shut Mr Parker's mouth? In that same church where this prayer was offered, we have often seen, during this very season, men, women, and children, standing in crowds in the porch, waiting in vain an invitation to take a seat in the pews that were not half filled; but at Music Hall, where Mr Parker preaches, there is a free gospel, so far at least as the opportunity of hearing it is concerned. Is it a wonder that the people choose the latter? Would it not be better than offering such prayers as these, if the wealthy members of the churches, instead of sweeping contemptuously, clad in their silks, furs, and satins, past the stranger and the poor, who would like to hear the word of God, would kindly, and like Christians, give these visitors, the people, a chance to sit down in the house of God?

Another prayed as follows:

"O Lord, send *confusion* and *distraction* into his study *this afternoon* and *prevent* his finishing his preparation for his labours to-morrow, or if he shall attempt to desecrate thy holy day by attempting to speak to the people, meet him there, O Lord, and confound him so that he shall not be able to speak!"

Columns might be written upon that as a text, but comment on such rant is wholly unnecessary. We cannot help, however, suggesting that "confusion and distraction" are very little likely to aid Mr Parker in reforming his theology, nor do we think that the praying brother would be injured if he had a little less of confusion and distraction on his own mind. Another prayed thus, after naming Mr Parker:

"Lord, we know that we cannot argue him down, and the more we say against him, the more the people flock after him, the more they love and revere him. O Lord, what shall be done for Boston, if thou dost not take some of these matters in hand!"

What a confession have we here! Is it true that Mr Parker's logic and eloquence are unanswerable? We do not think so, and laymen as we are we would sooner undertake to argue him down, than to pray him out of his stronghold with such petitions as those that were offered up on the occasion referred to, and a few of which we have quoted. One of the brethren exhorted his brethren to pray that "God would put a hook in Theodore Parker's jaws so that he may not be able to speak!" Is that a way of making him less revered and loved by the people?

We have no space or inclination here to discuss the peculiar views of Rev. Theodore Parker, nor is it pertinent to our purpose. We may remark, however, that we do not agree with him in his ideas of the Bible and of religion—in other words, we are not one of his disciples, and never heard him preach but once, though we have read with much interest many of his lectures and sermons. But we would remind these zealous brethren that if his [Parker's] work be of God, they cannot overthrow it, and if it is of Satan, we have no doubt that it will come to nought. At all events, the style of supplication and remarks indulged in at these meetings in relation to Mr Parker, is very far from being either wise, considerate, or calculated to do any good to him or anybody else; it partakes not of the spirit of charity, "which endureth all things," which "vaunteth not itself," and "thinketh no evil."

The sooner all this unseemly demonstration ceases, whether it proceeds from ignorance, zeal without knowledge, Phariseeism, or bigotry, the better for the cause of religion, the progress of the revival, and the conversion and *reformation* of individual souls.

This document was handed to Mr Parker in his pulpit on the morning of Sunday, March 7, 1858. It comes from a responsible man :—

"The writer attended a prayer-meeting, yesterday, P. M. [March 6,] at Park-street church. There were about forty *men* present [being about the same number that once conspired to destroy Paul]. The *sole* object of the meeting, as we learned after going in, was to pray for the conversion of the notorious *infidel*, Theodore Parker. The following are some of the forms of prayer employed :—

"'O Lord, *if* this man (Parker) *is* a subject of grace, convert him and bring him into the kingdom of thy dear Son ; but if he is beyond the reach of the saving influence of the gospel, *remove* him out of the way, and let his influence *die with him !*'

"'O Lord, send *confusion* and *distraction* into his study *this afternoon*, and *prevent* his finishing his preparation for his labours *to-morrow*, or if he shall attempt to *desecrate* thy holy day by attempting to speak to the people, meet him there, Lord, and *confound* him so that he shall not be able to speak !'

"One prayed thus :—

"'Lord, we know that we cannot *argue* him down, and the more we say against him the more will the people flock after him, and the more will they love and revere him. O Lord, what shall be done for Boston, if thou dost not take this and some other matters in hand !'

"Another prayed thus :—

"'O Lord, if this man will still persist in speaking in public, induce *the people* to leave him and come and *fill this* house *instead of that*.'

"One exhorted his brethren to pray that 'God will put a *hook* in *this* man's *jaws*, so that he may not be able to speak.'

"One prayed thus :—

"'O Lord, meet this infidel on his way, who, like another Saul of Tarsus, is *persecuting* the church of God, and cause a light to shine around him, which shall bring him trembling to the earth, and make him an able defender of the faith which he has so long laboured to destroy.'

"One requested his brethren, whether in their places of business, or walking in the streets, or wherever they might be, to *pray* for Mr Parker every day *when the clock should strike one*.

"P.S.—In the meeting above referred to, prayers were offered for *no other person besides Theodore Parker*.

"SUNDAY, March 7th."

The following document, in the form of a certificate of stock, was issued at Philadelphia, and thence sent to Mr Parker by a highly excellent gentleman of that place. It is a remarkable specimen of a Protestant *indulgence*, for sins past, present, or to come:—

"AMERICAN SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE SOCIETY."

AUXILIARY TO EVERY BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION IN THE LAND.

[Vignette, angel with a trumpet, sounding:]
'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men.'
[Figure of the globe, with the inscription:]
'The field is the world.'
[And below:]
Foreign Mission, Home Mission, Sabbath School, Seamen's Friend, Education, Bible and Tract Societies.

$—— ——Shares.

One hundred per cent stock.
This certifies that —— —— is the holder of —— shares in the SABBATH SCHOOL CHARITY FUND.

"Stockholders are guaranteed to receive one hundred times as much as they put in [Matthew xix. 29.] Those who continue to pay into the fund as much as six cents a week, for three years in succession, to be life members of the American Systematic Beneficence Society. Those who do this for six years to be honorary managers for life. Those who do this for ten years to be honorary vice-presidents for life. Those who do this [from love to Christ] *while they live* will have a free admission through the gates into the heavenly city, a snow-white robe, a heavenly harp, a crown of gold, and a seat at the right hand of the final Judge.

W. J. R. TAYLOR, Rec. Sec'y. M. W. BALDWIN, Pres.
JOHN GULLIVER, Cor. Sec'y. GEO. H. STUART, Vice-Pres.
THOMAS COOPER, Treasurer."

BEAUTY IN THE WORLD OF MATTER, CONSIDERED AS A REVELATION OF GOD.

A SERMON PREACHED AT MUSIC HALL, BOSTON, ON SUNDAY, JULY 15, 1855.

PREFATORY LETTER.

In the summer of 1855 I preached a series of discourses treating in an abstract and metaphysical way certain great matters, which required some severity of attention to master, or even comprehend. When it was nearly finished the weather became exceedingly warm, and it seemed to me not quite fit to lay heavy burthens on the minds of men to be borne in the heat of such days. Surely the wise minister will not change the blessed day of rest into a day of torment for the body as well as the soul. So, taking the hint alike from the season and the handsome things it brought forth so abundantly, I paused a little in my course of abstractions, and taking a theme which was sure to require none but spontaneous attention from any audience, I preached "Of the Lesson of Beauty,—a Sermon for Midsummer Day." The unusual form of the discourse may easily be objected to, and declared unfit to be preached from the pulpit; but I think the listeners then found it fit to be heard in the pews: and now, when thousands of miles from home, and compelled to be silent, I hope the readers will equally accept the lesson which the Infinite Teacher offers us all in the facts of nature, whence I have tried to translate it into plain human speech.

Had I written the sermon in this fair-skied island of the Holy Cross, the lesson would have been the same, but the

illustrations had been quite different. The same truth had ridden forth in like queenly sort, but in another chariot. Here it seems to me to be always midsummer, the weather is so genial by day and night. How clear the skies are! how brilliant the sun! It does not seem to go down and set, but rather to fall down and disappear, so suddenly, in this low latitude, does darkness take the place of day. But what a night it is; how quick the nobler stars come out; how large they look! The sun is scarcely out of sight, and not only the planets—Jupiter and Mars—appear, but the larger fixed stars, as Sirius and Arcturus, with handsome attendance, have kindled a new day; then all the lesser sons of heaven, the "common people of the skies," rush into the field with democratic swiftness, and yet without indecorous haste. The Great Bear seems like a constellation of twinkling moons. Here, too, are stars I never saw before: on the Southern Cross beauty is for ever "lifted up" for the benediction of the world, and thereby the Father draws the eyes of even savage men and foplings of the street. When the new moon is only a day old, it is plain she carries the old one in her arms. Now she has not been gibbous quite two days, but yet the printer could read this letter by her light, walking in brightness such as northern eyes behold not. Even now the clouds are coloured as by day, only with less brilliant hues, yet quite equal to the day-clouds of a New England winter.

The vegetation astonishes a northern lover of nature; all is so strange. Save the rose, here is not a tree, not a shrub, an herb, nor a weed which I have ever seen growing naturally before. The flora is a conservatory turned out of doors. Our oaks and elms are replaced by tamarinds, cocoa-nuts, mahoganies, and mountain-palms; our apple and pear trees by the sappodilla, the banana, the orange, and the breadfruit; our sweet-scented locust has many a thorny cousin here, but all strangers to me. While the minister, in his surplice, is reading the Episcopal litany, the oleanders, tall as the eaves of his meeting-house, not admitted to the church, solicited by the wind, bend down and reach in through the window—which needs no glass to hedge the flock from cold—and interrupt the artificial service with their natural Lesson of Beauty, not only for

that day, but for all days of the human year. Huge "silk-cotton trees," and "Guinea tamarinds," mainly leafless now, diversify the landscape with their queer and fantastic look. The hills are mantled with sugar-cane, whose joints contain a sovereign juice, the island's wealth,—where power and sweetness float together for human good or ill; all the estates run with vegetable honey now, as the wind-mills crush the wealthy crop. The "pride of Barbadoes" opens its gorgeous bloom at the top of all the hedges; the false ipecacuanha—a ghastly beauty not less than a ghastly cure—grows by the road-side, with a certain lurid, poisonous look, as have many of her asclepian kindred. There is beauty all around, at least gorgeousness. Even the fish are many-coloured, and look like flowers of the sea, so brilliant and so various are their hues.

You are amazed at the wealth of life in these tropic lands. The ground, the air, the water, are all animated; a dead fruit is quickly transfigured to new life, so soon do insects translate the decaying elements to a higher form of existence.

But after all it seems to me that nature here is not so nearly related to man as at home; vegetation has an unkindly look; you suspect these meretricious flowers, and keep aloof from the acacias and cactuses, and would have an honest homely apple-tree rather than all the prickly pears in all these islands which Columbus named after the eleven thousand virgins of Cologne. Perhaps this may be prejudice and narrow-mindedness on my part—I only tell what appears.

In our cold northern lands we get tired of the winter; a longing for spring affects our literature, and has its influence on the character of all northern civilization. Here it is perpetual summer, and nobody longs for what all enjoy. The absence of grass is not pleasing to one who lives where it comes "creeping, creeping, creeping everywhere." Who would like to be buried under ugly sedges, their solid stems growing a foot apart and six feet high, and never wet with dew? Grass-clad earth "unto our flesh is kind," and the sods of a New England valley will one day be sweet to us all.

But here as elsewhere the Lesson of Beauty is continual, and the same which is offered in New England. Large-

hearted Mr Welltodo might spend his Sunday as profitably in Friedriksstad as in his native town, for the Divine in Nature looks out everywhere, and means Love in torrid zones or frigid.

> "Then looke, who list thy gazefull eyes to feed
> With sight of that is faire, looke on the frame
> Of this wyde universe, and therein reed
> The endlesse kinds of creatures which by name
> Thou canst not count, much less their natures aime;
> *All which are made with wondrous wise respect,*
> *And all with admirable beautie deckt.*"
>
> T. P.

Friedriksstad, Santa Cruz, March 15, 1859.

SERMON.

All things are double, and he hath made nothing imperfect.—Ecclesiasticus xlii. 24.

Late at night of a Saturday the milliner's girl shuts up the close-pent shop, and, through such darkness as the city allows, walks to her home in the narrow street. All day long, and all the week, she has been busy with bonnets and caps, crowns and fronts, capes and lace and ribbons; with gauze, muslin, tape, wire, bows, and artificial flowers; with fits and misfits, bearings and unbearings, fixings and unfixings, tryings on and takings off; with looking in the glass at "nods, becks, and wreathed smiles,"—till now the poor girl's head swims with the heat of the day and the bad air of the shop, and her heart aches with weary loneliness. Now, thankful for the coming Sunday, she sits down in her little back chamber, opens the blinds, and looks out at the western sky, taking a long breath. Over her head what a spectacle! In the western horizon there yet linger some streaks of day; a pale red hue, toned up with a little saffron-coloured light, lies over Brighton and Cambridge and Watertown,—a reflection it seems from the great sea of day which tosses there far below the horizon, where the people are yet at their work; for with them it is still the hot, bustling Saturday afternoon, and the welcome night has not yet

reached them, putting her children to bed with her cradle hymn,—

"Hush, my child, lie still and slumber;
Holy angels guard thy bed;
Heavenly blessings without number
Hover o'er thy infant head!"

One lamp of heavenly light pours its divine beauty into the room. What a handsome thing it is, that evening star! No wonder men used to worship it as a goddess, at once queen of beauty and of love, thinking while unkindly ice tipped the sphere and bounded the Arctic and Antarctic realm, that she ruled into one those two temperate zones of an ideal world, and even the tropic belt between the two. Well, God forgive the poor heathens! they might have worshipped something meaner than that "bright particular star," full of such significance; many a Christian has gone further, and done worse, whom may God also pity and bless! If Kathie's eyes were bright enough, she could see that this interior star has now the shape of the new moon, and is getting fuller every night. But what a blessed influence both of beauty and of love it pours into that little hired chamber! Then all about the heavens there is such wealth of stars of all sizes, all colours,—steel-gray, sapphire, emerald, ruby, white, yellow,—each one "a beauty and a mystery!"

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star" (quoth she),
"How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky!"

What a sight it is! yet God charges nothing for the spectacle; the eye is the only ticket of admission; commonly it is also a season-ticket given for a lifetime, only now and then it is lost, and the darkened soul looks out no more, but only listens for those other stars, which also rise and set in the audible deep—for the ear likewise has its celestial hemisphere and kingdom of heaven. But those stars the poor maiden looks at belong to nobody; the heavens are God's guest-chamber; he lets in all that will.

Our maiden knows a few of the chief lights—great hot

Sirius, the three in Orion's belt, the North star, the Pointers, and some of those others "which outwatch the Bear," and never set.

Well, poor tired girl, here is one thing to be had without money. God's costliest stars to you come cheap as wishing! All night long this beauty broods over the sleeping town,—a hanging garden, not Babylonian, but Heavenly, whereof the roses are eternal, and thornless also. How large and beautiful they seem as you stand in dismal lanes and your eyes do not fail of looking upwards; full of womanly reproach as you look at them from amid the riot and uproar and debauchery of wicked men. Yet they cost nothing—everybody's stars. The dew of their influence comes upon her, noiseless and soft and imperceptible, and lulls her wearied limbs.

> "Oh sleep! it is a blessed thing,
> Beloved from pole to pole!
> To Mother God the praise be given!
> She sent the blessed sleep from heaven
> Which slid into her soul."

At one touch of this wonder-working hand the maiden's brain triumphs over her mere muscles, her mind over the tired flesh; the material sky is transfigured into the spiritual heaven, and the bud of beauty opens into the flower of love. Now she walks, dreamy, in the kingdom of God. What a world of tropic luxuriance springs up around her!—fairer than artists paint, her young "Imagination bodies forth the forms of things unseen," nor needs a poet's pen to give those "airy nothings a local habitation and a name." No garden of Eden did poet ever describe so fair, for God "giveth to his beloved even in their sleep" more than most wakeful artists can reconstruct when "the meddling intellect misshapes the forms of things." What a Kingdom of Heaven she walks in; the poor tired maiden from the shop now become the new Eve in this Paradise of dreams! But forms of earth still tenant there. It is still the daily life, but now all glorified: sleep and love are the Moses and Elias who work this real and not miraculous transfiguration. The little close-pent shop is a cathedral now, vaster than St Peter's, richer too than all Genoese marbles in its vari-coloured decoration: the furniture and

merchandise are transubstantiated to arches columns, statues, pictures. Ribbons stretch into fair galleries from pillar to pillar, lighter and more graceful than Cologne or Strasburg can boast in their architectural romance, writ in poetic stone, and the poor tape of the shop is now a stairway climbing round a column of the transept and winding into the dome far out of sight, till the mind, outrunning that other disciple, the eye, takes wing to follow its aërial ramp, which ends only in the lights of day streaming in at the top and colouring the walls, storied all over with the pictured glory of heavenly scenes. The counter has become the choir and chancel; the desk is the great high altar. The roar of the street—where market-wagons, drays, omnibuses, coaches, carts, gigs, mix in one continuous uproar from morn till eve—is now subdued into music, sweeter and sublimer too than the Pope ever heard in his Sistine chapel, nay, though he were composed for by Beethoven and Mozart, and sung to and aided by all the great masters of heroic song, from old Timotheus, who "raised a mortal to the skies," to St Cecilia, who "drew an angel down." What manly and womanly voices sing forth the psalm of everlasting life, while the spheral melody of heaven is the organ-chant which they all follow! A visionary lover comes forth,—his form a manly fact, seen daily from the window of her shop, his love a maidenly dream of many a natural and waking hour. He comes from the high altar; it is the Desire of all nations, the Saviour himself, the second Adam, the King of glory. He leads her through this church of love, built of sleep and beauty, takes her within the vail to the holy of holies, where dwells the Eternal; therein, that which is in part is done away, and the mortal maid and immortal lover are made one for ever and ever.

Sleep on, O maiden! and take thy rest till the morning star usurp the evening's place; nay, till the sexton toll his bell for Sunday prayers! I will not wake thee forth from such a dream, but thank the dear God who watches over those who rise early and sit up late, who giveth to his beloved even in their sleep!

Late on the same Saturday night, Jeremiah Welltodo, senior partner of the firm of Welltodo & Co., a wealthy

grocer, now waxing a little old, shuts up his ledger and puts it in the great iron safe of his counting-room. He is tired with the week's work; yet it is not quite done. The rest of the servants of the shop have long since retired to their several homes. He closes the street door—the shutters were let down long ago—and walks toward home. The street is mainly still, save the rumble of a belated omnibus creeping along, and a tired hackman takes off his last fare: for it is late Saturday night; nay, it is almost Sunday morning now,—the two twilights come near each other at this season,—and the red which the young milliner saw has faded out before the deep, dark blue of midnight; the clouds which held up the handsome colours for her to look at, have fallen now and are dropped on meadows newly mown. How they will jewel the grass there to-morrow morning!

Mr Welltodo's work is not quite done: business pursues him still. "Sugars are rising," quoth he, "and my stock is getting light. Flour is falling, the new harvest is coming in pretty heavy, opens rich. What a great flour country the West is. Well, I'll think of that to-morrow. Dr Banbaby won't interrupt me much, except with the hymns. I do like music. How it touches the heart! That will do for devotion. I wish the Dr didn't make such theological prayers, fit only for the assembly of divines at Westminster who are dead and gone, thank God! I wish some of their works had followed them long ago. Well, in sermon time I can think of the flour and the sugar. Good night, Mr Business, no more talk with you till to-morrow at eleven o'clock."

"What a lucky dog Jacob is, that partner of mine!—smart fellow too! went up to Charlemont at four o'clock, on the Fitchburg railroad,—bad stock that,—to see his mother; that won't be the first one he stops to see; somebody else waiting for him—not quite so old. Mother not first this time. Well, I suppose it is all right, I used to do just so. Did not forget poor dear old mother; only thought of somebody else then; just at that time thought of dear little Jeannie, so I did, couldn't help it. Mother said nothing about it; she knew; always will be so; always was; one generation goeth away, and another generation cometh, but love remaineth for ever. Well,

sugar's rising, flour getting low—think of that to-morrow. How my business chases me!"

But the wind from the country hills comes into town, its arms full of the scents of many a clover-field, where the haymaker with his scythe has just swept up those crumbs which fall from God's table, and stored them as oxen's bread for next winter; but the wind gleans after him, and in advance brings to town the breath of the new-mown hay. It fans his hot temples, shaking his hair, now getting gray, a little prematurely, and to his experienced memory it tells all the story of summer, and how the farmer is getting on. "What a strange thing the wind is," said he, "seventy-five per cent. nitrogen, twenty-four per cent. oxygen, and one per cent. aqueous vapour flavoured with carbonic acid! What a strange horse to run so swift, long-backed it is too, carrying so many sounds and odours! What a handsome thing the wind is—to the mind I mean. Look there, how it tosses the boughs of this elm tree, and makes the gas light flicker as it passes by! See there, how gracefully these long, pendulous limbs sway to and fro in the night! How it patters in the leaves of that great elm tree up at the old place!"

He lifts his hat, half to enjoy the coolness, half also in reverence for the dear God whose wind it is which brings the country in to him, and he fares homeward. All the children are a-bed, and as Jane Welltodo, thriftiest of kind mothers, has taken the "last stitch in time," on the last garment of little Chubby Cheeks, whose blue eyes were all covered up with handsome sleep when she looked at him two hours ago, the good woman lifts her spectacles, and wonders why father does not come home. "Business! business! it makes me half a widow; it will kill the good man. His hair is gray now, at fifty-five; it is not age, only business. 'Care to our coffin adds a nail, no doubt.' Killing himself with business! But he's a good soul, sends home all the young folks; lets Mr Haskell go off courting, 'to see his mother,' I think he calls it."

Just then the pass-key rattled in the door, the bolt was shot into its place, and Mr Welltodo ran into his parlour. "To-morrow," cries he, "let us go out to the old place. You and I will ride in the chaise, and take Bobbie.

Edward can go in the carryall, and take Matilda Jane and the rest of the family. He will like to deliver his piece to the trees before he speaks it on commencement day. College wears on Edward; studies too hard. Let him run out to grass a little up at Gove's Corner; 'twill do him good. I want a little smell of the country; so you do. How red your eyes are! 'Twill do us all good."

So they agree, and both think of the mothers that bore them, and of their own early days in the little country town, poor days, and yet how rich. They remember the little school-house and the mill, the meeting-house and the singing school they went to once, when music was not the most important business they attended to. Going separate, and coming home together; first two, next one, and finally many, in this wonderful human arithmetic!

The next morning before the first bell rung, they were at the old place where his father lived once, and his brother now; her father lives yet the other side of the hill, near the meeting-house. They will go there in the afternoon.

What green beauty there is all around! How handsome is the white clover which the city horse greedily fills his mouth withal, as Mr Welltodo and brother 'Zekiel lead the good-natured creature to the barn! The grocer follows the example, and has a head of clover in his mouth also,—sweeter than the cloves he put there yesterday. How delicate the leaf is; how nicely framed together! No city jeweller unites metals with such nice economy of material, or fits them with such accuracy of joint. What well-finished tracery on the leaf! Nay, the honey-bee who has been feeding thereon flies off in a graceful curve, and on wings of what beauty! How handsome the old elm tree is; how lovely the outline of its great round top! "That tree would weigh forty tons," says Mr Welltodo, "80,000 pounds; yet it seems to weigh nothing at all. There! that robin flies right through it as if it were but a green cloud. How attractive the colour; such a repose for the eye! Dear little bits o'babie is never cradled so soft as my eye reposes on that mass of green. But how pleasantly the colour of the ash-gray bark contrasts with the grass beneath, the boughs above! Look there, how handsomely the great branches part off from the trunk,

and then divide into smaller limbs, then into boughs, into twigs and spray! How the pendulous limbs hang down, and swing in the wind, trailing clouds of greenness close to the ground! Look at the leaves, how well made they are! There is cabinet work for you! What joining! How well the colours match! See where the fire-hang-bird has built a nest in one of those pendulous twigs,—just as it used to be fifty years ago! Dr Smith's squirrels will never reach that! What a pretty piece of civil or military engineering it was to put such a dainty nest in such a well-fortified place! How curiously it is made too! Such a nice covering! But here is the father; the mother is in the nest, brooding the little ones—rather late though. Did not marry early, I suppose; could not get ready!

"To choose securely choose in May,
The leaves in autumn fall away."

This is good counsel to bird or man, I suppose. That is right, old fellow! go and carry your wife her breakfast,—or dinner, I suppose it is. But what a blaze of beauty he is, newly kindled there in the boughs! a piece of a rainbow, or a bit of the morning, which got entangled in the tree and torn of. How he sings!—Grisi does not touch that; no, nor Swedish Jenny Lind, with all the Bobolinks of New England in her Swedish throat, as I used to think. Not up to that, not she! Then, too, the very caterpillar he has just caught and now let fall at my feet,—what a handsome thing that is! What eyes; what stripes of black on his sides, and spots of crimson on his back; what horns tipped with fire on his head! What a rich God it must be who can afford to dress a worm in such magnificence,—a Joseph's coat for a caterpillar! But next summer he will have a yet fairer coat, as he comes out of his minority with his new freedom suit on, and will flutter by all the flowers, himself an animate flower with wings. Butterflies are only masculine flowers, which have fallen in love, and so fly wooing to their quiet feminine mates. Let him go! I am glad the Oriole did not dine on such a meal as that. What a glutton, to eat up a Solomon's Song of loveliness! which was not only a canticle but a prophecy likewise—of Messianic beauty for next year.

"There is a hornets' nest,—a young hornets' nest. I used to be afraid of hornets; now I will let you alone, Mr Stingabee! Look there! city joiners and masons don't build so well in Boston as this country carpenter, who is hod-carrier, architect, and mason, and puts up his summer-house of *papier maché* under the great limb of the elm. There is a piece of conscientious work! done by the job too,—so he works Sundays,—but done faithfully. What an overseer the good God is! But no, Mr Hornet, your little striped head didn't plan that house; not an artist, only a tool in another Hand!"

In the mill-pond close at hand he sees the water-lilies are all out. How handsomely they lie there, withdrawing the green coverlets lined with white, and turned up with pink, wherein they wrapped themselves up yesterday at noon! What a power of white and saffron colour within their cups! How they breathe their breath into his face, as if he and they were little children! and are they not of the same Father, who cradles the lily and the man with equal love? The arrowhead and the pickerel-weed blossom there, and tall flags grow out of the soft ground, with cardinals redder than Roman Lambruschini. The button-ball is in its glory, swarmed about with little insects, promoting the marriage of the flowers. The swamp honeysuckle has put on its white raiment also, as if to welcome the world, and stands there a candidate for all honours. How handsome is this vegetable tribe who live about the pond! Nay, under his feet is the little pale-blue forget-me-not. Once he used of a Sunday to fold it up in a letter signed *I know you never will*, and send it to the dear little maiden, now mother of his tall boys and comely girls. She liked the letter all the more because it contained the handwriting of her lover and her God,—a two in one without mystery. She has the letter now, laid away somewhere, and her granddaughter years hence will come upon it and understand nothing. Like Eliot's Indian Bible, nobody can read it now. No; there must be a resurrection of the spirit to read what the Spirit wrote, —in Bible leaves, in flower leaves. There is the cymbidium he used to send on the same errand, saying, "God meant it for my Arethusa."

Hard by is the kitchen garden; the pumpkin vine, dis-

daining narrow limits, has climbed over the wall, and puts forth its great yellow flowers. In one of them is a huge bee tumbling about: he does not know it is Sunday, does not hear the bell now tolling its last jow for meeting; does not care what the selectmen are talking of outside the meeting-house, while within the old ladies are fanning themselves, or eating green caraway seeds, or opening their smelling-bottles, in the great square pews, where on high seats are perched the little uncomfortable children, whose legs do not touch the floor; he cares nothing for all that, nor whether the minister finds a whole new Bible or an old half Bible; he is buzzing and humming and fussing about in the blossom, powdered all over with the flower dust; now he flies off to another, marrying the dioecious blossoms,—the thoughtless priest of nature that he is, who does manifold work while seeking honey for his subterranean hive. Our grocer knows him well. "What a well-built creature that is," quoth he; "how well-burnished is his coat of mail; how nicely it fits; how delicate are those strong wings of his! Sebastopol is not so well armed for offence and defence. What an apparatus for suction! the steam fire-engine rusting out in the city stables is not so well contrived for that, though it did cost the city ten thousand dollars and that famous visit to Cincinnati. But why all this wealth of beauty? Is not use enough, or is God so rich that He can dress up an humble bee in such fine clothes? so benevolent that He will not be content with doing less?"

On the other side, the pasture comes close down to the pond: some of the cows stand there in the water, protecting their limbs from the flies; others lie ruminant in the shadow of an oak tree. Wild roses come close down to the lilies, and these distant relatives, but near neighbours and good friends, meet in the water, the one looking down and reflected, where the other lies low and looks up. Spiraeas and sweetbriers are about the wall, where also the raspberries are now getting ripe; andromedas shake their little white bells, all musical with loveliness; the elder-bush is also in blossom, its white flowers grateful to the eye, as to the manifold insects living and loving in its hospitable breast. How clean is the trunk of the bass-

wood; how large and handsome its leaves; how full it is of flowers! to which the bees,

"with musical delight,
"or their sweet gold repair."

A little further off the chestnut trees, also in their late bloom, dot the woods with unexpected beauty,—looking afar off like white roses sprinkled in the grass. How well their great round tops contrast with the tall pines further up on the hill! The grouping of plants is admirable as the several beauty of each. Nature never combines the inappropriate, nor makes a vulgar match. There are no misalliances in that wedlock. How lovely is the shadow of the oak, as it lies there half on land, half in the water! The swallow stoops on the wing, dips her bill, and then flies off to her populous nest in the rafters of the barn; how curiously she clings there, braced by her stiff tail, and wakes up the little ones to fill their mouths! and then comes such twittering as reminds the city horse of his own colthood in the far-off pastures of Vermont.

"Ah me," says the grocer, "what a world of use here is! see the ground, how rich the clover is! time it was cut too,—running into the ground every day. How the corn comes out! Earth full of moisture, air full of heat, country never looked finer! How the Indian corn, that Mississippi of grain, rolls out that long stream of green leaves; it will tassel this very week! What a fine water power the pond is! only ten foot fall, and yet it is stronger than all the king's oxen, turns 'Zekiel's mill just as it used to father's, sawing in winter and spring, and grinding all the year through; now it does more yet, for he has put the water to 'prentice, and taught it many a trade. How big the trees are! that great pasture white oak, twenty feet in circumference,—Captain McKay would give two hundred dollars for it, take it where it stands, here; it has only one leg to stand on, but so many knees! That hill-side where the cows are, what admirable pasture it is, early and late! see the white clover—a little lime brought that out! what a growth of timber further up! What a useful world it is! what a deal of engineering it took to put it together! only to *run* such a world after it was set up must take an Infinite Providence. It is a continual

creation, as I told Dr Banbaby; but he could not understand it, for 'it was not in the Bible,' no part of revelation; '*continued creation* is a contradiction in the adjective;'—well, well, it is an agreement in the substantive, a fact of nature if not a word of theology. What a useful world! But what a power of beauty there is too! How handsome the clover is!—Miss Moolly Cow, you don't care anything about that; it is grass to you, to the bee it is honey; it is loveliness also to my eyes. The Indian corn—a Mississippi of use is it? Why, it is the loveliest Amazon that ever ran in all this green world of grains! That millpond grinds use for brother 'Zekiel all day long, makes him a rich man. But what beauty runs over the dam, year out, year in, and comes dripping down from those mosses, on the stones: how much more of it lies there in the pond to feed the lilies, handsome babies on that handsome breast,—and serve as looking-glasses for the clouds all day, the stars all night! This makes all the neighbours rich, if they will only hold up their dish when it rains wealth of handsomeness. Beauty is all grist,—no toll taken out for grinding that. Mill-pond is useful and beautiful at the same time, a servant and a sister. How that little cat's paw of wind rumples its dress, and those

'Little breezes dusk and shiver,'

just as Matilda Jane read it to me in Tennyson last Sunday afternoon, when her mother was hearing Banbaby preach on the 'Fall of man.' What an eye that Tennyson has!—he sees the fact; daguerreotypes it into words. If I were a poet, I would sit right down before nature and paint her just as she is; that is the way Tennyson does. So did Shakespeare—did not put nature's hair into papers; liked the original curl; so do I; so does God. There, it is all gone now, just as still as before! I used to fish here,—but I only caught the outline of the hills, and the shadows of the trees. How those great round clouds come and look down there, and see their own face! What! don't you like it, that you must change it so fast? Well, you keep your beauty, if you do change your shape. What sunny colours! It is Sunday all the time to the clouds and the pond. How all the hills are reflected in

it! and see the linden tree, and the great oak, and the white-faced cow, the house, the wall and the sweetbriers on it, and underneath all are the clouds! so the last is made first, and the first last. Mr Church, who painted that Andes picture at the Athenæum, could not come up to this; not he; no, not if he had Titian to help him! Look at the reflection of that great oak tree! Worth two hundred dollars for use is it? Captain McKay shan't have it; no, not for a thousand dollars! No, no, dear old tree! Grandfather who was shot at Lexington used to tell grandmother, and she told everybody of it, that it was a large, full-grown tree, when his great-great-grandfather built the first log-house in town. Underneath that he first took his pack off his shoulders, and his hat from his head, and stood up straight, and offered his prayer of thanksgiving to God. 'Ebenezer,' said he, 'hitherto hath the Lord helped us,' and he called his first son by that name—Ebenezer Welltodo. Here the old pilgrim buried Rachel, his first daughter, a tall girl, they say, but delicate. She died when she was only fifteen,—died the first year of their settlement, came over from England. But the garden rose could not stand the rough winters of those times, faded and died. The old pilgrim—he was only thirty-six or eight then, though—buried that rosebud under the great oak. When he was digging the grave, a woodpecker came and walked round on the trunk of the tree, and tapped it with his bill, and then stood close to his head and looked at him with great red eyes. He never had seen such a woodpecker before, nor any wild creature so tame, and called it a bird of paradise sent to tell him that his daughter was safe in the Promised Land. So he finished her grave, and lined it with green twigs which the oak-pruner had cut off from the tree, and covered her young body with the same—they had no other coffin—and filled it up with earth, and planted a wild-rose bush there for headstone. So this Rachel, like the other, was buried under a tree, and this Jacob also had his Oak of Weeping. I don't know how it is, but there has been a woodpecker in some of the great dead limbs ever since. Dear old oak! if there be 'tongues in trees,' what stories you could tell! You are as fair to the memory as to the eye. You shall never go to the mill;—

too beautiful for use, you build what is worth more than ships, for there is a heart in you!

"Look there, where the old barn stood! how the ivy and wild grape vine have come and covered up the rock, casting a handsome veil over what man left bare and ugly. So it is on all the roadsides betwixt here and town. One day the railroad embankments will be also green and lovely. First come weeds,—a sort of rough great coat, then grass, then flowers also. So is it with all our destructiveness. Nature walks backward, and from her own shoulders casts the garment of material beauty on the human shame of Waterloo and Balaklava, and all the battle-fields of earth. See how the rock is covered with vegetation: houseleek here, celandine there, and saxifrage—how early it comes out, close to the snow; while mosses and lichens grow everywhere! Beauty pastures even on the rocks—God feeding it out of the clouds: He holds forth a cup, and every little moss comes and drinks out of it and is filled with life.

"What does it all mean? Is God so liberal, that, after drawing use for the customers at his universe of a shop, he lets the tap run awhile merely for the beauty of the stream? Use costs us hard work, but the beauty of nature costs nothing. He throws it in as I do the twine and paper with a pound of cheese. No; for that I get pay for in another way. He gives it, just as I gave little Rosanna Murphy, the Irish girl with the drunken father who went to the house of correction for beating his family—thank God I don't sell rum—just as I gave Rosie an orange last Friday when she came to buy the saltfish. That is it; he gives it in. 'Don't charge anything for that,' as I told poor little Rosie, who had been crying for her good-for-nothing father: 'We don't ask anything for that. I give it to you that you may be a good girl and happy, and know there is somebody richer than you who takes an interest in you; to let you know somebody loves you.' How she dried her tears and did thank me!

"Well, it must be a good God who makes such a world as this, and when we only pay for the dry saltfish of use —often with tears in our eyes—pats us on the head, flings in this orange of beauty and makes no charge, 'so that you may be a good girl and happy, and know that some-

body takes an interest in you,—that you have a friend in the world!'

"'Comes of nothing,' does it? 'No plan in the world, no thought,' is there? 'The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God,'—that is, because he is a fool. He must be a fool to think so, a natural born fool, a fool in four letters. Well, I pity him; so does God. Poor fool, he could not help thinking so. I do not believe in Dr Banbaby's God,—a great, ugly devil, sending Elias and two bears—miraculous she-bears—to kill, and 'carry off to hell,' forty-two babies who laughed at his bald head. I don't believe in such a devilish God as that! it is worse than the fool's no-God. But there is Wisdom and Power somewhere! Think of all this,—sermon on the mount, sermon on the hill, sermon in the pond, in the oak tree—a dear good sermon that is,—sermon in the wild-rose and the lily! Yes, that swallow twitters away a whole one Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm of praise to God. How all Nature breaks forth into voice as soon as you listen! I don't blame her; I would if I could. Sing away there, fire-hang-bird! buzz away there, humble bee in the pumpkin blossom! there is an Infinite Goodness somewhere! You don't know it, but you grow out of it, all of you! The world itself is but one little moss, drinking from the cup God holds in his hand. Ah me! if the Rev. Banbaby would come out here and read God's fresh handwriting, and not blear his eyes so continually over the black print of John Calvin and the Synod of Dort; if he would study St Nature only half as much as St Revelation, he would never have preached that sermon on the 'Damnation of the Unbaptized,' and declared that all such were lost, and especially infants, on whom God visits the sins of their parents for ever and ever,—which he did let fly on the Sunday after poor widow Faithful lost her only child, a dear little boy of fifteen months. No wonder she went crazy the next week, and I took her to Worcester!

"This must be the meaning of it all,—it is a REVELATION OF GOD'S LOVE. That is what it is. Consider the lilies of the pond,—they all teach this: If God so clothe the lilies in brother Jacob's mill-pond, watch over them, ripen their seed thus curiously under water, sow it there, and keep the race as lasting as the stars, will He not much rather

bless every soul of saint or sinner, O Rev. Banbaby? Oh, foolish congregations of self-denying men, who think you must believe in all the clerical nonsense and bad-sense which ministers preach at you! where are your eyes, where are your hearts, where are your souls, that you make such a fuss about?

"Why this longing, this for ever sighing
For such doctrines ghastly, hateful, grim,—
While the Beautiful, all round thee lying,
Offers up its low, perpetual hymn?
Would'st thou listen to its gentle teaching,
All that restless longing it would still,—
Flower and pond and laden bee are teaching,
Thy own sphere with natural work to fill."

Mr Welltodo is right; that is the meaning of it all. Love sums it up: "All things are double"—use this, beauty that: Old Testament and New Testament are thus bound up in the same volume of Nature. What a revelation of God's goodness this world of beauty is! How it comes to the tired young milliner, soothes her weariness, quickens her imagination, and then laps her in the arms of sleep, till all is joyous, blessed rest! No, in that rest she longs for another tranquillity,—the soul's rest in the infinite perfections of God.

How this mundane beauty comes to the calculating man, lifts him above his "sugars" and his "flours" he meant to spend all Sunday in thinking over; and shows him the heavenly meaning in this life of ours!

What a revelation it is of the Cause and Providence of all this world! God gives us use! "giveth liberally." You might expect it. But that is not enough for Him. He adds another world, which feeds and cheers the superior faculties. There is use for need and virtue, beauty also as overplus and for delight. We ask corn for bread; God makes it handsome and it feeds the mind. It seems to me as if He could not give enough to satisfy his own benevolence. How he spreads a table with all that is needful for material wants, and then gives this beauty as a musical benediction to the feast,—a grace before and after meat! To a thoughtful man, how the sight of this wakens emotions of reverence, love, and trust! Who can doubt the causal Goodness which makes the fairness?

Men tell about "miracles," which prove "the greatness of the Lord" and "His goodness too;" that He was once angry with mankind, and sent a flood, which killed all the living things on earth, from the lowest plant up to the highest man, save only eight men and women and a troop of inferior animals, whom He kept in a great box, which floated for a whole year on this ocean of murder, and then let out the ancestors of all things that now live upon the earth; that He miraculously confounded the speech of men building a city, and they fled asunder, leaving their abortive work; that He miraculously plagued Egypt with grotesque and awful torments, and by miracle led Israel through a sea of waters closing on their foes, and into a sea of sand, which ate up one generation of the Israelites themselves; nay, that by the ministration of one Hebrew man, continued miracles were wrought for forty years; and then, yet more wonderful, by another, at whose word water was changed to wine, the bread of five sufficed five thousand men, the wanting limb came strong again, the dead returned to life,—nay, at his death, that the very sun stood still, and darkness filled the heavens at high noonday, while the rocks were rent, the graves stood wide, and buried saints came back to light and life. Believe it not! To me such tales are ghastly as Egyptian idols and Hindoo images of God, mixing incongruous limbs of beast and bird and man. In this little leaf there is more divinity than in all those monstrous legends, writ in letters or carved out in stone. But the daily wonder of nature, which is no miracle,—that is the actual revelation of God's power and goodness, a diamond of love set in the gold of beauty.

Look all about you! What a ring of handsomeness surrounds the town! What a heaven of loveliness is arched over us! See how earth, air, and water are turning into bread! Out of the ground what daily use and beauty grow! Think of the thousand million men on earth; the million millions of beast, bird, fish, insect! They all hang on the breasts of Heaven, and are fed by the motherly bounty of infinite perfection. This is a clover blossom at one end of the stalk,—at the other end is God. Yes, all rests in Him, flowers out of Him, lives by Him, leads us to Him. All this material beauty of nature is but

one rose on the bosom of Deity, overlooked by the infinite loveliness which is alike its Cause and Providence. Yea, the universe of matter is a revelation of Him,—of his power in its strength, of his wisdom in its plan and law, of his love and his loveliness in that perfume of the world which we call beauty. Earth beneath and Heaven above are greater and lesser prophets, gospel and epistle, and all unite in one grand Psalm, "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, ON EARTH PEACE, AND GOODWILL TO MEN."

WHAT RELIGION MAY DO FOR A MAN.

A SERMON DELIVERED AT MUSIC HALL, BOSTON, ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 2, 1859.

Friend, go up higher.—Luke xiv. 10.

It is New-year's Sunday to-day—when men become thoughtful, as they look back on the irretrievable past, or forward to the uncertain future. Let us use, therefore, the occasion of the day, and so this morning I ask your attention to some thoughts on WHAT RELIGION MAY DO FOR A MAN, A SERMON FOR NEW-YEAR'S SUNDAY.

In religion there are always three things which make up that complex of consciousness. First, there are feelings, the emotional part; second, ideas, the intellectual part; and third, there are actions, the practical part. These three, I take it, are the essentials of all conscious religion, and you actually find them in all the different forms thereof which prevail, either amongst us or the rest of mankind.

But see what difference there may be in what is called religion,—in respect to these various elements of this complex consciousness.

1. The IDEA may be that man is a miserable wretch, totally depraved, no good thing in his body, his mind incapable of learning truth by its own power, his conscience good for nothing, and his affections "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." It may be that God is a snake, a crocodile, a bull, a white elephant, a consuming fire—Moloch, Zeus, Jupiter, Woden, Thor, Jehovah, a

Hebrew peasant, or the ecclesiastical triune God who created the world for his own glory, and means to torment the majority of its inhabitants for ever, for his own good will and pleasure. So the relation between man and God may be thought to be ever-during wrath—Almighty hate on the one side, and the most helpless prostration on the other.

2. The FEELING may be such as comes unavoidably from this idea of man, God, and their relation. It may be fear, waxing into sheer and utter despair and hopelessness of all good, both now and hereafter.

3. The ACTION may be such as comes from these emotions: it may be killing an only son, as a sacrifice to Jehovah, making the male children pass through the fire unto Moloch, sacrificing a daughter unto Artemis, consecrating a monk to Jesus of Nazareth, or a nun to the "Virgin Mother of God." It may be a deed of Jews crucifying Jesus, or of Christians massacring the Jews by the million; it may be the act of Simeon the Stylite standing for six and forty years on a pillar-top in the market-place, or of an Indian devotee throwing himself before the car of his idol god; it may be that of the Catholic inquisitor tearing men to pieces with his Spanish or Italian rack, or of the Protestant inquisitor burning Servetus at Geneva, or hanging a Quaker woman from the great elm on Boston common.

All these ideas, feelings, actions have prevailed, and have been called religion, and that too amongst earnest and self-denying people.

On the other hand these three things may be entirely different.

1. The IDEA of man may be that he is the crown of creation, with a noble nature, and a grand destination here on earth, and hereafter, we know not where, with powers proportioned to his destination, and certain to develope themselves in such manner as to secure this ultimate welfare. The idea of God may be that of infinite perfection—power almighty, wisdom all-knowing, all-righteous justice, and all-embracing love.

The idea of the relation between the two may be that God is a perfect Creator and a perfect Providence, making

all from love—the highest possible motive, for infinite welfare—the highest possible purpose, and in the material and the human world furnishing the adequate means to go between his motive and his purpose and so secure the end.

2. The FEELING may be the natural one which springs up at the thought of such a God and the consciousness of such a nature in us, and the certainty of such a relation of the Infinite Father and Mother to all mankind. It may be a feeling of reverence, of that perfect love which casts out every fear, of confidence in God's motive, purpose, means —all passing into a perfect and absolute trust in God, in his world here and all his worlds hereafter.

3. The ACTION may be the normal use of every limb of the body and every faculty of the spirit, obedience to the natural laws which God writes on the body and in the soul, a life of manly toil and thought and the natural enjoyment of all reasonable things—works of industry, of wisdom, justice, affection, philanthropy, all growing like a flower from this seed of piety within the soul.

All these conflicting and hostile ideas, feelings, and actions have prevailed as religion. What a difference between the two! What I named first, I will call *false* religion, for it comes from a mistaken and perverted action of the human powers. The other, let me call *true* religion, for it comes from the normal and healthy action of the same powers. The odds between the two is the difference between lust and love—between the ghastliest sickness and the fairest and handsomest health.

Each form of religion is thought of infinite value by its devotee—the false and unnatural, not less than the fit and true. The Spanish Inquisitors, as an act of faith, tearing a woman to pieces with their rack, the half-frantic Christians in a prayer-meeting asking God to confound some humble minister, put a hook in his jaws, or else remove him from the world; all of these are as earnest and devoted as those noble women who show their love to God by justice and charity to needy men, and with blessed feet write out the gospel of love, in the hovels of the poor, in the pestilence of a camp, in the cell of the maniac and the criminal, or stooping down, on the ground write FREEDOM

as a guide-board to the slave. But let not this identity of name make you and me for a moment doubt the odds between such opposites.

A bigoted minister, superstitious, ignorant of God and man and true religion, spiteful, and yet devout, hanging a Quaker woman because she believes in the free inspiration of the human soul; a thoughtful wife, trusting in God, loving her children and their father, ruling her household with discretion, industry, religious love, and living kindly toward all mankind,—what an odds there is betwixt the two! Yet he values his religion as much as she. So the filthiest squaw who rots in her California subterranean den values her mode of life as highly as Von Humboldt the science that he learns and sends abroad to bless the world.

Against the false form of religion I have spoken, perhaps, less than I should, but certainly far more than I would, for I never think of it without a shudder at the ghastly horrors it has produced, and still sows the world withal.

All round me do I see its wicked work; for as the forehead of a moaning man is grimly wrinkled by the bitter draughts he swallows through mistake, whereat his palate quivers still, and his throat turns rough while the poison begins to work him fatal ill below—so with earnest and self-denying believers of those bitter doctrines which they too have swallowed also by mistake, do their sad looks, distorted mouth, belittled brow, their doleful voice and ghastly prayers, attest the unkindness of that religion which so wars against the soul. It is this odious thing which has been opposed, hated, and scorned by some of the most philosophical and humane men who ever lived. They spoke against that religion whose emotion is fear and despair before God, and hate before men; whose ideas are that man is a worm, and God a great ugly boot, lifted up to tread him down with endless crush of misery; whose actions are unmanly, unjust, and wicked, watering the earth with blood, and sowing it with seeds of woe. It is against these things that Grecian Epicurus, and Lucretius the Roman, his pupil, heathens both, with many more, waged a continual war; it is against false religion that many a noble man and woman since have lifted up their voices, and won a bad name in the Christian church,

and come to a bloody end from Christian hands. But do you ever find a philosopher who speaks against the other form of religion,—against Infinite Perfection in God,—against emotions which are trust, and love, and charity,—against actions which are honour, wisdom, justice, mercy, loving-kindness towards men? Yes, I know you do find, here and there, such as speak against all this, but it is those who have been first corrupted by that false religion, which consists in the opposite of those good things. What natural man ever prefers sickness to health, sickness, and its miserable weakness, to strong and handsome health? We send a sectarian form of religion to heathens, and they laugh it to scorn. Half a million Bibles have been published in Siam, and scattered amongst the heathens there, and there are not three dozen Christians in all Siam! They took the Bibles,—they rejected the doctrines which the missionaries taught. But did you ever hear of a nation of heathen men rejecting justice, integrity, charity, and saying, "We will have no such things amongst us! kill every just man! let us burn with slow fire every man who loves his kind!" No, you never heard that; savage human nature does no such thing.

Now see what the true religious emotions and ideas can do for men.

I. In our early life we find developing in us certain great strong, instinctive appetites, those which tend to support the individual frame,—both those which ally us with others, and those wrathful passions whose function it is to defend us from other men. All these are good in themselves, each indispensable to human welfare, for the life of the individual, and the life of the race. But we see how easily they all run to excess; before we know our danger we are often thereby driven down to our ruin.

Every man must fight a battle between the reflective personal will and the instinctive animal appetites. Most men bear the scars of this conflict all their days, and grim recollections of the struggles which in their hearts went on unseen. What a story many an honest man and woman I now look upon, might tell of this conflict! Here and there the animal appetite conquers, and the man

never walks afterwards upright and free, but goes bowed as a slave all his life. The thoughtful old man looks on the lads in a college, on the boys and girls in a great school, and bethinking himself of his own internal life, and the struggles within him—desire drawing one way, and conscience pointing another—a little tear springs into his manly and experienced eye, half hope and half fear. I know a woman once, rather a cold and worldly one, but strong-minded and experienced well, and tender-hearted still, who never heard the little boys pattering about their cradle, but she sighed inwardly at the thought of the rough ways those little feet must tread before they rested in calm, victorious, and virtuous manhood.

Now, if a youth or maiden be trained up to know there is an infinitely perfect God, who made man of the best possible material, in the best possible way, for the best possible purpose—a God who plans all for the good of each, and placed in us that spark of his spirit which we call conscience;—if they were trained up to trust this infinite God—to feel love and reverence for him, and a most sacred desire to keep every command he writes in their consciousness; if they were thoroughly taught that the true service of Him is to listen to that still small voice of conscience and obey its sure and gentle word—Why, what a safeguard this would be! If they were taught that the laws of God, with beneficent function, worked as irresistibly as gravitation, that no deed, no thought, no automatic instinct, ever escapes their righteous jurisdiction—then what a motive would the young people have to live a clean pure life, free from the immoral violence and heats of passion, which destroy the welfare of so many men!

There is a paradise of joy whereto all youths and maidens have a birthright of entrance. Through the automatic instincts, nature calls, "Come up hither, O young man, O young maid! Come up hither, and be blessed!" But there is only one gate which opens and lets in, and that is the gate of duty; thereto through the wilderness of life there is only one guide, and that is *conscience*—the true Emmanuel, or God-with-us.

I see how strong are these various appetites, what excesses they lead to, what ruin they often end in. Look at the drunkard, the glutton, the debauchee—men who

are slaves to the baser part of their appetites, and yet do not get the manly delight which even those parts of us were meant afford.

But in forming man, God provided us with a power to rule all these passions, and make every appetite not only secure its own special satisfaction, but serve likewise the general welfare of the whole, and promote the development of the highest faculties of the spirit. Man's body and his soul are a unit, and there is not a passion in the body but the soul needs it all, and needs its normal satisfaction.

To this end, to harmonize those appetites and passions, I know no help like true ideas of religion and the natural emotions thereof; they lead unavoidably to noble actions.

How we misjudge the value of common things! "What a fortunate young man is Augustus," said the men and women of Boston many years ago, "he inherits so much money,—and of course so much social respectability, which is the function of money!—born in one of the first families," — that is, the richest, — "and inheriting such an estate; what a fortunate man!" "I wish *I* had his lot," said the young men; "I wish I could give such a fortune to *my* children," said the old ones. Ah me! the fortunate man is he who starts in life with the true religious ideas of man, of God, of His providential care for you and me, and all mankind; with the true religious feelings of reverence, gratitude, trust, love, and the unconquerable will to keep his every command. The culture which brings about this is not always costly, it must be precious, and that for ever.

II. But the great battle of life is not over when we have put down wrath, lust, and drunkenness, and have got through the wild land of the appetites. There are vices of conscious reflection not less than of instinctive passion. In New England I fear these are the greatest dangers, for few men warn you against them. Nay, what in a commercial and political town is called a great success in life is commonly the greatest defeat of the manliest thing which is in you.

The subtler vices are love of approbation, often degenerating into mere vanity, which is to honour what the

froth is to the sea,—the scum it genders in chafing with the world; ambition, the excessive love of power; covetousness, the intemperate love of money: these often make a dreadful ruin of a man. How many wealthy wrecks do I see, floating all the week in the streets, and drifted, perhaps, for an hour into some meeting-house of a Sunday. A man may be a millionnaire in dollars, and yet a bankrupt in manhood.

Bears and frogs and various other creatures hybernate a part of every year; they lay still, seemingly unconscious; their powers all live, but the functions are suspended; nothing is wholly dead, all is sleeping. How many men do I know, who undergo a partial hybernation, and that for long years! Their conscience has "denned up," as the bears in winter, their humanities are all torpid as the frogs who now lie buried in the mud. Yet these men walk about, all their higher faculties winter-quartered in their heart. Men salute them, "Good morning, sir! a happy new year!" They sit on platforms and are called by honourable names. Ministers preach to those hybernal souls as vainly as to a winter congregation of Russian bears. Nay, worse; hybernant ministers hold forth to a hybernating pack of "worshippers." So, in the catacombs of Egypt, you shall find the ancient priest amid his ancient congregation, mummies all.

A few years ago, in Boston, an ambitious religious society built a meeting-house more costly than they could pay for, or keep; so they were forced to leave it; the steeple turned the church out of doors. I never knew but one instance of this kind. Societies are wiser. But how often do I find that some respectable vice—covetousness, vanity, or ambition—has turned the man out of his own body. Politics have twisted that man's neck; fine dress exposes the shame of this civilized Adam and Eve, so fearfully clothed, that they are not ashamed while they yet for ever seek to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord God, always walking in every garden, at the cool or the heat of day, with eyes that travel through eternity. Here the shop unhouses the man; this is crushed by an avalanche of domestic goods; and this has bottled his soul along with his drink: there the pulpit, with its snow-white halter, chokes the life out of the minister. Zeal for

a false religion has slowly changed Dr Banbaby into a practical atheist, all the theological funeral bells are tolling the knell over his humanity, while they mean to ring a joyous peal for his accession of divinity.

Miss Seemly had a lithe, trim figure, white teeth and rosy cheeks, eyes that if seldom brilliant were always sharp; a slender fortune and a stain on her family. At marriage she became Mrs Seemly-Worldly; wedlock only added to her name; it did not change her character, which, in joy and sorrow, she has fiercely developed ever since. With a temper which, if not sweet, was at least a pleasant sour, in youth she committed no sin of instinctive passion, neither of attractive love nor of repulsive wrath; she was too decorous, nay, perhaps too conscientious, for either. The marriage was a bargain,—the Worldlys were a "great family," distant relations of the Seemlys too. Mrs Seemly-Worldly, for still she keeps her maiden name, thought wealth was worth far more than love. She was devoted to her husband; for the lowlier purposes of life she was a convenient mate. She chose her religion, as her marriage bonnet, for its conventional fitness to the hour,—neither held an unfashionable feather; it was the religion of worldliness. Now, she aims at two chief things, to make a fashionable and ecclesiastic show, so demure at prayers, so jaunty at a ball; and to transplant her daughters to soft, rich soil. Oh, Mary Magdalen, and all ye othe scriptural Marys, is there a patron saint for the abandoned woman only of the street, is the only prostitution theirs? The Seemly-Worldlys are older than Jerusalem, and in the midst of such it were no wonder, if to a woman taken in adultery, clear-sighted Jesus really said, "Neither do I condemn *thee*. But go thou and sin no more." And to the Seemly-Worldlys of his time, how bravely did he say, "the publicans and the harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before you!"

An old story tells that Actæon, a famous hunter, kept many hounds, and they ended by eating him up. Actæon is an old name; it is Greek besides. How many Actæons do you and I know—men eat up by their own dogs! I know men who damage their body by their business; so do you. The other Sunday I spoke of them—a sermon meant likewise partly for myself; I hope we shall all heed

it. Many more I know, who break down their conscience, their affections, their higher manhood. Mechanics sicken of their craft; painters have the lead-colic; tailors and shoemakers are pale and dyspeptic-looking; printers go off in consumption, which they have caught from breathing ink and type metal. Is that the worst? I know men whose ambition, whose vanity, whose covetousness, has wrought them worse mischief—a consumption of the mind, a numb-palsy of the affections, gout in the conscience, a general dyspepsia of their humanities.

When Mr Successful first came to Boston, "with nothing but his hands," he was a sufficiently generous young man. When he began his housekeeping, a little string of money, only one hundred and fifty dollars long, went clean round his annual expenses; the ends met and tied, and he had still a penny for the poor. When he was comfortably rich, his heart was still human and needed small prompting for kind deeds. He lit the fire on a poor widow's hearth, and the blessing of such as were ready to perish came, the sweetest benediction on his modest daily meal, or the annual sumptuous feast of thanksgiving, when his grateful eye fell on the unbroken ring of domestic jewels gradually twined by his own and his fond partner's hands. Now Mr Successful is very rich, awfully rich, wealthy beyond hope; he talks in a "high prosperous voice" at the bank; in the council of hard faces you turn off from his; law is his only conscience now. It would take his right hand a great while to find any alms which his left hand ever does. So great is the load of gold on his shoulders, he cannot lift either hand to his lowliest pocket; once charity was wont to come, he heard her gently tapping at his wooden door; now all day she shall vainly beat against his gate of gold, and he will not hear that dear angel of humanity. His ears are full of money, he hears but one sound, chink, chink, chink. Theology tells us of stony hearts; they may be broken and managed then. But God save us from a heart of gold, which only beats like the mint-hammer to make coin, and circulates nothing but money, sending it out arterial, and taking it back dark-coloured and venous. In Bunyan's wonderful poem, as the pilgrim draws nigh the end, his burden lightens, and at length falls off, leaving him to

walk upright and joyous, a free man. But Mr Successful has a huge, deep, wide-mouthed pannier fastened to his back, and as he trudges through this storm of money, it so rains gold thereinto that his burden greatens continually, and with bended back, and out-pressed eyes, knock-kneed, he staggers on his way, ere long to fall beneath his load, dead and buried under his pannier full of gold. On his gravestone let it be writ, HE COINED HIS HEART, AND TURNED HIS CONSCIENCE INTO DOLLARS; HIS HUMAN SYMPATHIES BECAME EAGLES.

You sigh over the human ruins cast ashore on infamous places, stranded in jails, or caught upon the gallows, and so exposed to public shame; kind souls take interest in their cruel fate, however so well deserved; "there breaks not a heart but leaves some to grieve." Beneficent lawyers sometimes try to defend these poor creatures, and save them from their fate, and gentle-hearted ministers would intercede. Nay, the State has forecasting care for such as are like to be whelmed under in that perilous sea of crime; builds her breakwaters, and artificial harbours, calling them "Reform School," "Industrial School," and other Christian names. But men are ruined otherwise; how many an ambitious craft encounters total wreck while sailing for the presidency, for the Governor's chair, or some political port far less renowned! The shore of Congress is lined with the fragments of shipwrecked men, wherewith, also, the coast of every State is painfully deformed. What argosies yearly go under, all their virtuous wealth spilled out among the heedless waves!

The saddest human ruin now conspicuous in America is no wretch in the State prison, no lunatic at Worcester or Taunton; he will never be hung on any gibbet. It is a man uncommonly well gifted, well educated too; his praise is in all the newspapers. Pah! let us not look at him again; it is New-year's Sunday, turn we to more pleasant things.

Terrible are these vices of reflective calculation. I know of nothing which so enables a man to correct them, and to keep his hounds to hunt for him, not eat him up, as true religious ideas, true religious feelings. These put you in harmony with the universe around you, and with God who is everywhere. They set your little mill where

the stream of life falls on its wheels and the great forces of the universe come and grind for you all day, all night, year out, year in. If you want to heap up more money than you can ever earn, or either wisely spend, or manfully can keep, I would advise you to renounce true religion; give it all up, and go into business with your whole soul — nay, with your whole body and mind. Aaron's calf of gold will serve your turn better than Moses' God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, immensely better than the universe's God of Infinite Perfection. If you wish to be very popular with very popular men, or with cold, hard, cruel persons, who often control society for their special use, I would advise you to make yourself into a practical atheist, ringing with loud professions of ecclesiastical religion, noisy as brass, but like brass destitute of all love for the Infinite God of the world, and all charity towards men; that is the card for such a game. But if you wish to be a man, or a woman, and enjoy all your human rights, welfares, hopes, joys, and those dear, heartfelt delights, which are to happiness what well-earned daily bread, and nightly sleep, are to health; why, I would advise you, before all things, to heed that "still, small voice," which spoke once, at least, in the heart of the worst of us, and still comes to mankind, gently pleading, "Friend, come up higher; come up higher, friend!" I would advise you to seek that religion whose ideas are of the Infinite Perfection of God, whose feelings are reverence, and trust, and love, and whose actions are the natural morality of this body and this soul.

There are times of temptation. They come to us all, the passionate earlier, the ambitious later; sometimes both together. Alas me! which way shall I turn? Here is an internal guide which God has given to watch over me, and keep me, and bear me up in his hands, lest at any time I dash my foot against this twofold stone of stumbling and rock of offence. Has not every man felt the temptation? Who has not sometimes likewise yielded when desire from within leagued with occasion from without, and both were too much for us? And, while plucking the forbidden fruit, have we not all been stung by that bee of remorse which mercifully lurks therein?

Some have eaten the forbidden fruit so long that remorse troubles them no longer with pain; they are so paralyzed they know no more the sweet delights of life which virtuous lips alone can taste. In these times, the true idea of religion comes back to men, the infinitely perfect God, man so noble in nature, conscience so true, will so strong, human destination so fair and wonderful—and deep religious emotions spring up again, reverence for God and his unchanging law of right. Then we say to the tempter, "Get thee behind me!—who am I to debase my nature and sully my soul?" Many a noble youth has thus tottered on the sharp and perilous edge of ruin till true religion flashed her early light upon his road, and he turned and crept back safely. Many a noble man has been worse tempted, and by the same guide has been led through a wilderness hotter than the Arabian.

The stain of vice is on us; we have yielded to the temptation; we have broken with conscience, and marred the integrity of our own soul. Then, too, the true religion comes to us with marvellous healing power. There is hope: for the God all-mighty, and all-righteous, is all-loving too; and He has provided me ways of return. In the sickliest frame there is always a recuperative struggle, an effort to expel the disease and return to the normal type. But the body is mortal, meant to last only a few score years: so its power of recovery has limits never far off; a fever soon burns down this six-foot tenement; a drowning child pulls a strong man after it into the fatal stream—the dead baby-hand strangling a vehement and full-grown life; a short fall breaks our precious urn—'twas only earthenware—and men gather up the fragments to bury them out of their sight, while its precious balm ascends to heaven, filling the neighbourhood with its sweetness. But there is no spiritual death—only partial numbness, never a stop to that higher life. The soul's power of recovery from wickedness is infinite: its time of healing is time without bounds. There is no limit to the *vis medicatrix* of the inner, the immortal man. To the body death is a finality; but the worst complication of personal wickedness is only one incident in the development of a man whose life is continuous, an infinite series of incidents all planned and watched over by absolute

love. "One day shalt thou be with me in paradise," is what Jesus might say to each penitent thief:—ay! to the red-handed remorseful murderer gnawing his own heart; yes! to the New England kidnapper, not yet gnawing his own heart, still prowling about the courts, licking his jaws and hungering for other prey. The providence of God is infinite, and his love embraces the wickedest of men, not less than the best. In the world of matter and of man, He has provided an infinite means to rouse the self-restoring energy of the sin-sick soul—painful means no doubt they may be to us, but blessed in their motive, and oh! how joyous in their end! I think there is not in the Old Testament, or the New, a single word which tells this blessed truth that penitence hereafter shall do any good, or that the agony which men shall suffer never so many years shall wipe out one single scar of wickedness. But the universe is the revelation of God, and it tells you a grander truth,—infinite power and infinite love, time without bounds for the restoration of the fallen and the recovery of the wicked. In all the family of God, there is never a son of perdition.

This true religion is to be preached also in jails, and the hands of the murderer will then be lifted up in penitence and aspiration when he finds that there is an Infinite Mother who looks even upon him, and through the blood on his soul beholds the heavenly child and loves him still.

There are also times of prosperity. The little olive-plants are green with prophecy. Not a pearl has fallen from our chain of affection twined by loving hands about the neck; our cup runneth over. Then the man of true religious ideas and emotions feels his brotherhood to all mankind. "Who am I," quoth he, "but one of God's children? Did He make me stronger than they? Then the powers that He has given, and the fruits of my gatherings thereby, are they only for myself? Are they not also for other men? Should not I help men more, as I am abler than they? Am I only a hand to gather for myself, and keep? only a mouth to consume in selfish greed? Am I not also much rather a hand to uphold the honest man who yet is weak and goes tottering; to distribute my power to those, who though earnest and honest, yet

need? Am I not a mouth to instruct and warn; to heal, and soothe, and bless?" There can be Catholics who are mean and selfish in the use of all their faculties; such men may be Protestants just as well—Trinitarians, Unitarians, Methodists, Baptists, nay, Christians after the fashion of the Christian Church; believing all the creed blameless, and hoping "salvation through Christ" from "the wrath of the dreadful God." But such men cannot have the true religion. He who has its ideas and emotions, perforce must have its actions; for every tree bears fruit after its own kind, not another's kind.

What joy does this religion add to prosperity! Who, think you, is richest in welfare—the miser, that gripes his four million dollars with lean, tenacious hand, which only opens at the touch of death, to litter his money on the ground, where he goes dust to dust; or that wise, kind man, who is contented with enough, and with his mercy cheers the cold fireside of some lone woman, where virtue and poverty sit down continual on her hearth? I do not underrate riches. I think I am one of the few New England ministers who duly honour wealth, who preach the natural gospel of industry, of comfort, of enjoyment, of riches also when fairly gained. But I would rather have the Warren-street chapel in my heart, and shining out of my face, than all the hoarded money of the Rothschilds in my hand.

How we misjudge of values; if some inspired Diogenes should light his lamp and seek the richest man in Boston, he might find him possessed of a great estate; he might find him with a very little one, so small that the assessors never found it out, nor levied a property-tax upon him. How we misrate things! The material wealth is outward, and the spiritual is inward. Happy the man who has the spiritual; blessed also, if he have likewise the material, wherewith to lengthen his arm, and spread good thereby!

There are likewise times of sorrow. The world's tide is against us; riches vanish; some commercial crisis sweeps off a competence; we are too old for new hope; the faces of our dear ones have changed, and they are sent away. How handsome was the urn of love that held our jewels! Now it is broken; the diamonds and rubies are all trodden

into dust! fragments only litter the floor of life. How full of heart-breaks is our earthly day! it is seldom difficult to die for ourselves, but to leave those who make life worth the living, to feel the treasures of our affection slip through our hand so eager and yet so impotent, this is the bitterness of death. Silent the young wife sits by her husband's side,—it is the better part of her which is soon to be shorn away; the memory of youthful courtship comes back, hopeful and fragrant as a morning in May, when the apple-trees have also put their nuptial glory on: she brings again the bridal's throbbing joy, and re-collects the scattered bliss of all the following years. She looks on that forehead, once so fair, and full, and smooth, the throne of many a kiss, but roughened now, ploughed over and harrowed too with various pain. Their two right hands are clasped in private now, as once, when both were conscious, they were publicly made one; but his drops from her, it is only the wife's palm that warmed the husband's hand. She is made a widow while the joy of her bridal and the scattered bliss of all the following years became new consecrate to her.

In hours like this what shall sustain our heart? Only the certainty that there is an Infinite Power, all-wise, all-good, that loves us, loves them, and if He change their countenance, it is only from the mortal into the immortal glory, brightening and brightening for ever. If this certainty does not wipe every tear from the eye of youth or age, it yet turns it into a telescopic glass wherewith they see the expanded souls of their dear ones. Therein the mother beholds the baby whom death painfully delivered of the flesh, now become a child in heaven, already blessed with power and virtue which quite surpass its living parents here. There the widowed heart of man or woman beholds the dearest transfigured into human glory, which mortal flesh could never put on, nor even wear upon the earth.

"Who would have thought my shrivelled heart
Could have received greenness? It was gone
Quite under ground, as flowers depart
To see their mother-root when they are blown—
Where they together,
All the hard weather,
Hid from the world, keep house unknown."

This religion, at all times of life, I think is the chief treasure of human achievement. But if it be wise in such matters to speak of what a man has not inly experienced, and so known by heart, then I should say I think true religion is not quite whole and mature in childhood, youth, or manhood; that it takes old age to make it complete in all its parts, and perfect in each detail. Childhood has its bud, growing from the germ which none notice in babyhood; youth has its flower,—how fair and sweet a thing it is; in manhood comes the full foliage, and the expanding fruit falling, apple by apple, as it gets ripe; but in old age, only, appears I think the full harvest, when the very leaves turn into beauty ere they die, and the full ripe apples hang handsome on the tree, or, falling, clothe the ground with their sweet loveliness, each one a fruit historic, pointing back, also a seed prophetic of another spring whose sun rises not on us here; we have its dawning, not its day.

Yesterday we took each other by the hand, and welcome smiled in mutual eyes as we gave each other good wishes. Children rose early, their limbs half-clad, and ran with pattering feet to their father's and mother's door, or to a more venerable generation, and lisped out their "Happy New Year!" To grave and thoughtful men what does it mean? The cause of greatest and perennial happiness is the true religious ideas, right religious feelings, manly religious deeds. What better thing would you? what greater could you? Let us wish this, each to himself, all to our brother men.

The old year ended a day and a half ago. The Infinite Providence bends over the cradle, or the play-ground, or the school-room, or the workshop of her children, and wishes us all a happy new year. But the wise Mother leaves us somewhat to ourselves, to work our weal or woe, and though she holds the tether, and never lets us stray beyond recall, she holds it something loose, and lets us run and choose our way. Which will you,—the meaner or the nobler life? You may have the worst thing, or the best thing, and call either your "religion!" Over your head and my head there hovers the ideal self that we

know we ought to be. It points to years happier than we yet have known, and calls with cheery voice,—"Friend, come up higher! Come up higher, friend!" Let you and me not be disobedient unto that heavenly vision.

FAREWELL LETTER,

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN BOSTON.

MUCH-VALUED FRIENDS,

When I first found myself unable to speak to you again, and medical men bade me be silent, and flee off for my life to a more genial clime, I determined, before I went, to make ready and publish my New-year's Sermon, the last I ever preached; and the one which was to follow it, the last I ever wrote, lying there yet unspoken; and also to prepare a letter to you, reviewing our past intercourse of now nearly fifteen years.

The phonographer's swift pen made the first work easy, and the last sermon lies printed before you: the next I soon laid aside, reserving my forces for the last. But alas! the thought, and still more the emotion, requisite for such a letter, under such circumstances, are quite too much for me now. So, with much regret, I find myself compelled by necessity to forego the attempt:—nay, rather, I trust, only to *postpone* it for a few weeks.

Now I can but write this note in parting, to thank you for the patience with which you have heard me so long; for the open-handed generosity which has provided for my unexpected needs; for the continued affection which so many of you have always shown me, and now more tenderly than ever; and yet above all for the joy it has given me to see the great ideas and emotions of true religion spring up in your field with such signs of promise. If my labours were to end to-day, I should still say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," for I think few men have seen larger results follow such

labours, and so brief. But I shall not think our connection is ended, or likely soon to be: I hope yet to look in your eyes again, and speak to your hearts. So far as my recovery depends on me, be assured, dear friends, I shall leave nothing undone to effect it; and so far as it is beyond human control, certainly you and I can trust the Infinite Parent of us all, without whose beneficent providence not even a sparrow falls to the ground: living here or in heaven, we are all equally the children of that unbounded Love. It has given me great pain that I could not be with such of you as have lately suffered bereavements and other affliction, and at least speak words of tenderment and sympathy, when words of consolation would not suffice.

I know not how long we shall be separated, but, while thankful for our past relations, I shall still fervently pray for your welfare and progress in true religion, both as a society, and as individual men and women. I know you will still think only too kindly of

Your minister and friend,

THEODORE PARKER.

Exeter Place, 27th January, 1859.

THE END.